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THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION—The Week-end Review. *Incorporating The New Statesman, The Nation and Athenaeum, Week-end Review.*

THE crowd that collected for King George's funeral broke all records. It outnumbered the Jubilee crowd by about half a million. The police seem to have been taken by surprise. The barriers which were to be erected at 9 o'clock had to be put up an hour earlier, and many people were unable to reach the expensive seats they had paid for. The crowd was as good-tempered as usual. But there were complaints that late comers were able to place themselves in front of people who had waited all night on the wet pavements with their feet in the gutter. At the Marble Arch the pressure broke through the police cordon, and at some points on the route the procession was retarded by the narrowness of the passage which the police and soldiers managed to keep open for it. As a result the procession arrived more than half an hour late at Paddington. The funeral itself was impressive, and in accordance, we believe, with the wishes both of King George and the new King, was far less ostentatious than is usual on such occasions. It was all the more impressive for that.

Blood and Oil

As a result of the recent fighting the Italians have made a considerable, though not in any sense decisive, advance on their southern front. In the north they are still held up and harried by guerilla attacks in the Makale region. A great deal of blood has been spilt in the southern battles, and Rome has actually admitted the loss of a good many white officers and men. But the official statements of casualties by one side and the other are unreliable; each exaggerates the enemy's losses and minimises its own. Meanwhile the "examination" of the oil embargo moves slowly. It will be several weeks, it is thought, before the report of the committee of experts gets first to the Governments and then to the Committee of Eighteen. The question of oil tankers is a new complication. It has been argued that the United States and Italy together have so large a share of the tanker fleet of the world that Mussolini could afford to laugh at an embargo imposed on the League States. But as against this, it is said that the Americans need most of their tankers for their own trade, and that few of the Italian vessels could be relied on for long ocean voyages.

Financial Assistance to Abyssinia?

Early in November the Ethiopian Government applied to the League of Nations for financial assistance; it cited the draft convention of 1930 as indicating the intention and method proposed by the League. After several postponements the Council decided last week not to recommend the granting of such assistance. But the principle of affording aid to a State which is the victim of aggression

has been frequently recognised by the League Assembly as an important means of promoting collective security; and we understand that a number of influential persons in the City of London, who are disgusted at the attitude of the League Powers, are seriously considering the possibilities of procuring financial assistance for the Ethiopian Government privately, perhaps in the form of a loan. We suspect that an appeal by responsible individuals might meet with a response that would surprise those who talk as if the League's business were not to end the war, but to save Mussolini from defeat.

The Uruguay Agreement

M. Litvinov had a field day at Geneva last week when the dispute between the Soviet Union and Uruguay came before the Council for discussion. The Uruguayan Government has ordered the Soviet Minister to leave the country because of his alleged complicity in the recent rising in Brazil. M. Litvinov questioned whether " the history of Brazil or Uruguay lead us to believe that they can be in need of guidance from outside in the art of risings." He was able, moreover, to discount the attitude of offended national prestige adopted by the President of the Uruguayan Republic, by recalling a previous occasion when he had informed the Soviet Ambassador that he would no longer regard the refusal of the Russian Government to admit a certain Radvitsky into Russia as a personal affront if the Soviet Union would consent to buy 200 tons of Uruguayan cheese! The Uruguayan representative claimed that his Government was merely exercising its sovereignty and that the whole affair, being an internal matter, was not the concern of the League. M. Litvinov replied that a nation which signed the Covenant automatically abrogated a part of its sovereignty and was bound in honour to submit any dispute with a member State to arbitration. The *Times*, whose usually high standard of reporting almost automatically lapses whenever Russia is mentioned, reported the discussion in a full column without a reference to the vital point of M. Litvinov's interpretation of sovereignty. When Señor Guani refused to produce evidence of Soviet interference, M. Litvinov asked that the charge should be substantiated before a court of arbitration with the Council acting in accordance with Article 12 of the Covenant. Why should the *Times* describe this as evasion?

The Vienna Trial

While Prince Starhemberg marched in the funeral procession in London, twenty-seven men and women were brought to trial in Vienna on a charge of high treason against the Fascist Government for the establishment of which Prince Starhemberg's Heimwehr was so largely responsible. In pre-war days such a mass trial in Tsarist Russia of Social Revolutionaries who, like these people, had been in prison for over a year without trial would have attracted world-wide attention. The accused are headed by Marie Emhart, a state railway employee, and Karl Hans Sailer, formerly assistant editor of the *Arbeiter Zeitung*. These two are liable to the death penalty, the others to imprisonment for ten to twenty years. In presenting the charge against them, the Public Prosecutor effectively exposed any pretence that the Schuschnigg Government has produced civil peace in Austria. After the prohibition of the Social Democratic Party in February 1934, he described the Socialists and Communists as immediately forming a secret party organisation, issuing in the autumn a leaflet declaring that, since they were " robbed of all democratic rights," the working class must employ revolutionary methods to overthrow the Fascist dictatorship, and arranging in Czechoslovakia for the development of an underground Schutzbund. This trial is only one amongst many which the Austrian courts are disposing of month after month. These trials make it clear that the police and Fascist auxiliaries have a vast movement to deal with. Though people are unceasingly arrested there are always plenty to take their place, and the flood of underground literature continues. The question is whether the British Government in its natural desire to make Austria a bulwark against German expansion has been well advised to pin its faith to a regime which has destroyed democratic rights. The only regime in Austria which could be relied on to co-operate with its neighbours and to resist the Nazis would be one which included the Austrian Socialists, who are by their very nature bound to be opponents of the Nazis to the bitter end.

The Greek Elections

The general election held in Greece last Sunday has shown the strength of the Venizelist Liberal Party. This was formerly the Republican Party, but its republican principles are for the present in cold storage, since its leaders have accepted King George, and will presumably continue to support him so long as he behaves as a constitutional monarch. The Liberals have won 127 seats out of the total of 300 in the Chamber. After them come the Popular Party of M. Tsaldaris with 69 seats, the Kondylis-Theotokis combination with 63, the Communists with 15, and finally half a dozen different groups with a handful each. A Coalition Government is now expected, under the leadership possibly of M. Sophoulis, the Liberal leader, and including among its members M. Tsaldaris. Whether it will be a good Government remains to be seen. It can hardly fail to be better than its recent predecessors; and if it goes about its business honestly, it should at least give the Greek people a decent rest from the faction fighting under which they have suffered for so long. And in that better atmosphere it may be possible to carry out some desirable economic and social reforms.

Fortunate Veterans

Congress has done what it was expected to do in the matter of the Soldiers' Bonus Bill. By overwhelming majorities both Houses have passed it a second time, and so nullified the President's veto. One may doubt, however, whether on this occasion even he ventured to use his influence or to pull every party lever against it: certainly all the usual official spokesmen of the Democrats voted for it, even in the Senate. A more shocking misuse of an organised vote to blackmail the Legislature has never occurred, even in the long and scandalous history of American war pensions. The most generous care had been lavished, regardless of expense, on the sick and wounded of the world war: large numbers had even been re-educated at a university. The bonus, originally conceived as a species of insurance benefit maturing in 1945, is now a mere gratuity, a dollar for each day of a

private's service. It goes to all who were "drafted," even to those who never reached the front lines or quitted the U.S.A., or to their heirs. It is payable in interest-bearing bonds, but these may be cashed at once. The total liability to the Treasury will be about £450,000,000. Millions of men, who have been long unemployed, or who are living as share-croppers or tenants on unremunerative farms, would have a better claim to such a largesse than most of the ex-soldiers. The only thing to be said for it is that it will inject with a sudden rush a spate of purchasing power into the market, and will give a fillip to recovery on the eve of the elections.

The Importance of Mongolia

Fresh "incidents" continue to occur in which ever larger numbers of armed men are involved along the frontiers where Outer Mongolia touches Manchuria. The Outer Mongolian administration, whose chiefs have just returned from a visit to Moscow, remains unyielding, while the Japanese give a significant publicity to these affairs. Simultaneously, on Soviet territory, the Russians have made numerous arrests of persons accused of espionage and sabotage in the Japanese interest. It is not obvious why the Japanese who can, if they choose to do it, eat up Northern China without resistance, should prefer to challenge the Russians, whose military strength they must respect. But there are two possible answers. (1) The Japanese may aim at enlisting all China under their own leadership in a Holy War against Communism. (2) If Moscow is correctly informed, the plans concerted between Berlin and Tokio for a joint attack on the Soviet Union are now well advanced. This was Mr. Molotov's justification for the doubling of the Soviet military budget. On either hypothesis the Mongolian incidents might, when the campaigning season arrives, serve as a pretext for an attack.

The Miners' Settlement

The miners settled with the colliery owners, not because they were in any sense satisfied with the terms offered them, but because they had the common sense to prefer a settlement which gave them something to a strike which might easily have ended in their defeat. As far as wages were concerned, the owners' final offers, except in Yorkshire, were practically no improvement on the terms originally proposed; and had the wage offers stood alone, they would probably have been rejected as inadequate, despite the uncertain prospects of a strike. But the owners did, on second thoughts, add to their wage offers a readiness to establish some sort of national negotiating machinery; and this, in the minds of the miners' leaders, matters a good deal more than the immediate wages paid. For the Mineworkers' Federation has been fighting, above all else, for national recognition; and its leaders believe that, given this, they can use national bargaining to far better purpose than they can the purely local bargaining to which they were reduced after 1926. It is not, indeed, yet clear how much the owners' acceptance of national negotiating machinery really amounts to; and it will not be surprising if there is a good deal of quarrelling over the details before it is actually set up. But, for the present, the bait of national recognition has been enough to persuade even the South Wales miners—who come off worst of all—to accept the terms.

Railways and Local Rates

We have no wish to discuss the subtleties of railway rating law, nor do we know how to attach any definite meaning to the curious legal fiction of an imaginary lessee of the railways by means of which the railway companies' liability to local rates has to be calculated under the Act of 1930. But the broad consequences of the House of Lords judgment in the Southern Railway case are fairly clear. By the decision of the Railway and Canal Commission, now upheld by the House of Lords, the liability of the Southern Railway to local rates has been approximately halved, and the local authorities have been deprived of a substantial amount of expected revenue, and will have to refund substantial sums which they have already received. The basis of the judgment is that, under the Act of 1930, the railway properties liable to rates (i.e., excluding rolling stock and other non-rateable property) have to be valued at the price which an imaginary hirer of them would be prepared to pay for their use, that is, in accordance with his expectation of profit from hiring them, after meeting all other necessary outgoings. We confess our inability to see how this purely hypothetical value can really be ascertained. But, however that may be, the immediate effect of the judgment has been to send the prices of railway shares rocketing up, and to set a good many people, including the mine-owners, wondering whether they cannot, by demanding a reduction in railway charges, succeed in appropriating a part of the swag.

Church and State

The controversy aroused over Parliament's rejection of the revised Prayer Book in 1928 revealed the anomaly of the present relationship between Church and State. The Archbishops' Commission, which has just reported on the subject, insists on the importance of securing greater spiritual autonomy and at the same time of maintaining the established position of the Church. It suggests that these two ends may be reconciled by Parliament recognising the Church's right to legislate for itself in spiritual affairs. The guarantee that any proposed measure should be rightfully passed by the organs of the Church without reference to Parliament would be given by the two Archbishops, the Lord Chancellor and the Speaker of the House of Commons. The arguments against strict parliamentary control are obvious. Parliament consists nowadays of "members professing any or no religion and representing not only England, but Scotland, Wales and the North of Ireland as well." This amounts to an admission that the views of the Church are no longer reflected in the nationally representative body at Westminster, and that therefore it should forfeit its right to be looked upon as a national institution. Moreover, the Church recognises "an obligation . . . which must continually transcend and even sometimes contradict the will of the Sovereign State." The conflict between the claims of the secular and spiritual authorities is here sharply defined, and recent experience in Germany has revealed that the issue is not merely theoretical. But if the Church wishes to secure the advantages of independence, it must be willing to sacrifice the privileges and financial advantages which its position as a National Church has naturally conferred upon it.

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EGYPT AND BRITAIN

THE political crisis in Egypt still drags on, to the familiar accompaniment of rioting by students and schoolboys. This ebullition of youthful tempers, though it is troublesome enough to the authorities, need not be taken too seriously. It is not, of course, peculiar to Egypt; it is a common symptom of nationalistic and revolutionary agitation here, there and everywhere. Nor in the present case is it all the work of the wicked Wafd, as we are asked to believe. Some of the manifestants appear to be partisans of Sidky Pasha, who has recovered from the universal unpopularity that he laboured under during his dictatorial regime from 1930 to 1933. And Nahas Pasha, the Wafd leader, has been using his efforts to calm the agitation. As regards the Cabinet crisis itself, it seems that Great Britain is not the villain of the piece. It is not true, we are told, that the Residency caused Nessim Pasha's resignation by insisting on the immediate formation of a Coalition Government; presumably that project sprang from the brains of King Fuad and his friends. There is in any case little chance of its being carried out. Nahas refused at the outset to have anything to do with it, and the Wafd confirmed his refusal. Subsequently a compromise seemed possible in the shape of a Government formed by Ali Maher Pasha, the King's right-hand man, which would include members from the United Front parties, who would not however officially represent their parties. But this scheme also, it is now reported, has been abandoned, and the problem of getting a Government to carry on till the elections in March is still unsolved.

To find the solution is obviously the business of the Egyptians themselves and not of this country. It is clearly important that the treaty negotiations which are to be taken up again shall be conducted with an Egyptian Government that represents Egypt and not merely an Egyptian fraction or faction. But Downing Street, we hope, has learned from past disasters the folly of interference or dictation in these matters. Whatever stop-gap Cabinet may be formed in Cairo, the general elections not many weeks hence are expected to return the Wafd with a big majority. If they do, then it is with the Wafd that we must deal. Democratic principles and common sense alike require that, and it should be all the easier since Nahas Pasha has expressed his readiness to include representatives of other parties in the delegation that Egypt will send to negotiate. There is not much chance now, even if the British Government were disposed that way, of playing the old game of "Divide et impera" by pitting one Egyptian party against another. All Egyptians are pretty well agreed on the main issue. They want independence—or, at least, the greatest practicable measure of independence that is consonant with their own interests. Their claims are crystallised in the draft treaty, which Nahas only rejected at the last moment after his protracted negotiations with the Labour Government in 1930. The world has not stood still in the last five years, and modifications may be found necessary or desirable in the draft of 1930 when the negotiations are reopened. But in substance it will stand; if there is to be a genuine and permanent settlement with Egypt, Mr. Eden will have to concede most of what Mr. Henderson conceded.

The draft treaty of 1930 was the outcome of proposals agreed on in the previous summer by Mr. Henderson and Mohammed Pasha Mahmud, who was then Prime Minister of Egypt. And the Henderson-Mahmud proposals themselves followed the main lines of the abortive agreement in 1927 between Sir Austen Chamberlain and Sarwat Pasha. We need not go into the details of this earlier history; what is important is the provisions of the treaty which came so near to being concluded in 1930. Those provisions established Egypt as a sovereign independent State, with certain minor and temporary qualifications. The British military occupation was to be formally terminated. Egypt's application for admission to the League of Nations was to be supported by Great Britain. There was to be an Anglo-Egyptian alliance and an agreement to pursue a common foreign policy consistent with the alliance. The responsibility for the lives and property of all foreigners in Egypt was to devolve exclusively on the Egyptian Government. The Capitulations were to be abolished as being "no longer in accordance with the spirit of the time and with the present state of Egypt"—or to be more precise, since this could not be effected by a stroke of the pen, Great Britain undertook to use all her influence to get the Capitulatory Powers to abandon their privileges, and to transfer the jurisdiction of their consular courts to the Egyptian Mixed Tribunals. The Suez Canal was a little more difficult; but it was clear that its protection was a vital matter both to Egypt and to Britain, and that the Egyptian forces were not immediately adequate to guarantee the full liberty and security of navigation. It was therefore agreed that a limited British force should be stationed near Ismailia, and also that the R.A.F. Depot should be transferred from Aboukir to Port Fuad. These rights of maintaining British forces on Egyptian territory were conceded for twenty years. If at the end of that period Egypt wished to terminate them and Great Britain did not, the League of Nations would be called upon to arbitrate.

So far so good. But there remained the question of the Sudan. The Egyptians laid claim to full sovereignty over the Sudan—a claim which, in the British Government's view, could not be substantiated either juridically or on grounds of expediency. Mr. Henderson took his stand on the Conventions of 1899, which established a joint Anglo-Egyptian sovereignty or "condominium." To this régime the Egyptians have always demurred; for the "dominium" has been Britain's and the "con" Egypt's. There have been good political reasons for that, in particular the strong objection of the Sudanese themselves to being ruled by Egyptians. Nor on economic grounds is the exclusive possession of the Sudan essential to Egypt. The fear that we should cut off the water supply from the Nile and so ruin Egypt is a bogy. It is difficult to see how any British interest could be gained by such an act, and with a treaty based on so intimate an alliance as this, it would be plain nonsense. But deadlock and breakdown came in the end not over this question, but over the right of the Governor-General to restrict Egyptian immigration into the Sudan. Professor Arnold Toynbee, commenting on the whole negotiations in his *Survey of International Affairs*, speaks of this stumbling-block as being "singularly slight," and observes that "it was evidently not beyond the bounds of possibility that a formula for the regulation of Egyptian immigration into the Sudan which would be satisfactory to all parties might

still be found." No doubt it might have been, and might still be. But it is also possible, if not probable, that the Egyptians will now advance other claims in connection with the Sudan which may be more formidable stumbling-blocks to a settlement.

Apart from this issue, the military question will inevitably bulk large to both sides. The Egyptians, like most other peoples in these evil days, want to increase their army. The British Government, in view of their own policy, and of the state of the world in general and of North Africa in particular, can scarcely object to that. But will they regard larger Egyptian forces as a good reason for smaller British forces in Egypt—especially if they attach importance to the threat from Libya, which was not in the picture in 1930? They can hardly hope to conclude a treaty which maintains the occupation in its present form—with British troops and guns, that is to say, ensconced indefinitely in Cairo and Alexandria. On the other hand, the Egyptians will presumably be prepared to reconsider the original modest arrangements for protecting the Canal.

The present moment is on the face of things a difficult one at which to embark afresh on these negotiations. But as the National Government—to the surprise of many of their friends and the still greater surprise of their opponents—has chosen to take the risk, we need not argue about it. Our own fear is not that the Government will yield too much to Egypt, but that they will be willing to yield too little. That is not to say that any and every claim advanced by Egypt must be regarded as right and proper. But her case for independence is a just one. Its justice has, indeed, been acknowledged by one British Government after another. The trouble is that we have been like Mr. Pecksniff's horse—"full of promise, but of no performance; it was always going to go and never going." And our obstinacy and pride and fear have on occasions, it must be admitted, been hardened by the unwisdom of the Egyptians themselves. But, despite all the quarrels of the past, the Egyptians remain fundamentally friendly to this country and, what is more, alive to the importance of the friendship. They certainly do not want to see British whips exchanged for Italian scorpions. We have the opportunity now, in our own interest as well as theirs, to exchange the whips for a treaty of fraternity.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF CONSTITUTIONAL MONARCHY

WHAT renders the problem of government so very difficult is man's constantly double attitude towards it, the fact that his attitude is always a mixture of two contradictory sets of wishes. On the one hand, he has very deep motives for wishing to be ruled. Feeling unequal to the task of controlling either his own or his neighbour's impulses, and longing to shift the responsibility for so doing, he demands some authority who shall shoulder the main part of this burden. On the other hand, as soon as the restrictions of authority are felt to be oppressive, he is impelled to protest and clamour for freedom. In an ordered society these two sets of impulses have to be co-ordinated, though in a constantly fluctuating rather than in any static form. At times either set may become predominant. When a people's sense of helplessness, of inferiority arising from guiltiness, becomes unbearable, there arises a passionate clamour for a "strong" dictatorial government, whether of the autocratic or socialistic variety; while when a thwarting of personal initiative is felt to be intolerable there is a call for revolution which may attain a murderous intensity.

Modern psychology well recognises that these shifting attitudes in the outer world mirror the constant conflict and instability in man's inner nature, the to and fro surges between the expressing and the restraining of his fundamental impulses. It is noteworthy that each side of the conflict may be depicted in either ignoble or laudatory terms. We may speak of the divine call to freedom, one of the noblest impulses in man's nature, as well as of his tendency to unrestrained and brutal licence. On the other hand, the controlling tendencies may assume the form of sheer persecution and hateful thwarting of life as well as the confident self-control that ranks as one of the highest of our civic virtues or the acceptance of God's will so characteristic of the greatest saints.

It is also well recognised that this dichotomy of man's nature expresses itself most vividly in the child's relation to his parents—the famous Oedipus complex. In the deeper layers of the mind the attitudes persist in their old child-parent terms, though in consciousness they may have been superseded by more complex ones, such as Herbert Spencer's *Man Versus the State*. No psycho-analyst would hesitate, on coming across the person of a ruler in a dream, to translate "ruler" as "father," and he would be at once interested in the way in which the subject's conscious attitude towards the ruler was being influenced by his underlying attitude towards his father. Mostly one should replace the last words by "the underlying *phantastic* attitude towards his father," remembering that in the child's imagination his father is either far more benevolent or far more cruel than most fathers are—and always more magically powerful and wonderful than any father is. It is the persistence in the unconscious of this element of magic belief that accounts for the recurrent irrationalities in people's attitude towards a Government, e.g., that blames it for all misfortune and imputes to its wickedness the non-appearance of an immediate Utopia.

Growing up signifies that the early sense of dependence on the parent (let me say "father," *tout court*), both real and imaginary, is replaced by a proper independence and self-reliance *without* any need for violent repudiation or destruction; also that the insoluble conflict between affection and parricide is replaced by an attitude of friendliness combined with a preparedness to oppose if need be. And any satisfactory solution of the general problem of government must include, among other things, a corresponding advance in the relations between governing and governed. I hope now to be able to show that, whatever its deficiencies may be, the success of the constitutional monarchy experiment is essentially due to the respects in which this advance has been achieved.

The experiment, or idea, starts with the assumption that, just as princesses cannot be abolished from fairy-tales without starting a riot in the nursery, so is it impossible to abolish the idea of kingship in one form or another from the hearts of men. If people are emotionally starved in this way they invent sugar kings, railroad kings or magic "bosses." The idea then boldly proposes: let us reserve a king particularly to satisfy the beneficent elements of the mythology in man's incradicable unconscious that will enable us to deal with the more troublesome elements. This is how it is worked out.

The essential purpose of the device is to prevent the murderous potentialities in the son-father (i.e. governed-governing) relation from ever coming to too grim and fierce an expression. To effect this the idea of the ruler is "decomposed," as mythologists call it, into two persons — one untouchable, irremovable and sacrosanct, above even criticism, let alone attack; the other vulnerable in such a degree that sooner or later he will surely be destroyed, i.e., expelled from his position of power. The first of these, the king, is the symbolic ruler, one not directly responsible to the people; the second, the Prime Minister, is the functional ruler, exquisitely responsible. With these precautions a safe outlet is available for the parricidal tendencies; they may come into action (*a*) in a form

that excludes physical violence, and (*b*) so long as they respect the taboo. Charles II would appear to have foreseen the coming arrangement when he wittily warded off the criticism of his epitaph-writing courtier with the words: "i' faith, that's true, since my words are my own, but my deeds are my ministers'."

In return for the concession made by the populace in mollifying their parricidal tendencies the Government also, by being always ready to accept the verdict of an election, renounces the application of physical force. Under a constitutional monarchy no minister labels a cannon, as Louis XIV did, *ultima ratio regum*. The important point of this consideration is that the institution of limited monarchy, so far from being simply a method of dealing with potentially troublesome monarchs, is really an index of a highly civilised relation subsisting between rulers and ruled. It could not survive, or even exist, except in a state that has attained the highest level of civilisation, where reasoned persuasion and amicable consent have displaced force as a method of argument.

When Thiers shallowly thought to define a constitutional monarch completely with the words, *le roi règne mais ne gouverne pas*, he was making a very considerable mistake. In a very deep sense such a king truly represents the sovereign people. I am not here referring to any personal influence of a particular monarch, such as Mr. Gladstone had in mind when he said that knowing Queen Victoria's opinion told him the opinion of the English people. But what of the members of Parliament, the accredited spokesmen of the people? They are temporarily so, and they may err. But when the significant words, *le roi le veult*, have been pronounced, it means in most cases that a permanent representative of the people agrees that their sovereign voice has been at least not grossly misinterpreted. The king is carefully shielded from all personal responsibility and yet he represents the final responsibility—and at critical moments may have to bear it.

An odd instance of the far-reaching influence of this sense of finality came within my experience some years ago. I was talking to the medical superintendent of a Canadian asylum in his room when a woman entered and demanded that her husband, a patient there, be discharged. The doctor, knowing the patient's dangerous tendencies, demurred, and a situation arose which it would have been quite easy to resolve with ordinary tactfulness. To my great astonishment, when the woman went on to say querulously, "What right have you to keep my husband?" the doctor made a histrionic gesture and declaimed the words, "I do so in the name of the King!" The woman subsided, though it was not quite clear whether it was surprise or awe had overcome her at the conjuring up of the supreme imperial authority.

The mysterious identification of king and people just hinted at goes very far indeed and reaches deep into the unconscious mythology that lies behind all these complex relationships. A ruler, just as a hero, can strike the imagination of the world in one of two ways. Either he presents some feature, or performs some deed, so far beyond the range of average people as to appear to be a creature belonging to another world. We do not know if the Spanish were really impressed on being told that their Queen could not accept a gift of silk stockings because she had no legs; but it is easy to think of less absurd examples, from the deeds of the Borgias to the impertinences of *Le Roi Soleil*. Einstein has furnished us with a current example of another kind. In the face of such phenomena one gapes with wonder or with horror, but one gapes; one does not understand. Or, on the contrary, he may capture the imagination by presenting to us, as it were on a screen, a magnified and idealised picture of the most homely and familiar attributes. It is here that the child's glorified phantasies of himself and his family find ample satisfaction. When the sophisticated pass cynical comments on the remarkable interest the majority of people take in the minute doings of royalty, and still more in the cardinal events of their births, loves and deaths, they are often merely denying and repudiating a hidden part of their own nature rather than giving evidence of having understood and transcended it. With the others there is no trace of envy, since the illustrious personages are in their imagination their actual selves, their brother or sister, father or mother. In the august stateliness and ceremonial pomp their secret day-dreams are at last gratified, and for a moment they are released from the inevitable sordidness and harassing exigencies of mundane existence. When to this is added the innumerable "homely touches" of royalty, the proof that they are of the same flesh as their subjects, together with signs of personal interest and sympathy with their lot, loyalty is infused with affection. And a constitutional monarch, so guarded from adverse criticism, has to have a pretty bad character before he arouses any. An autocratic monarch may be selfish and cruel, but kindliness and friendliness are the natural appurtenances of a constitutional monarch.

The psychological solution of an antinomy which the experiment of constitutional monarchy presents is also illustrated in the mode of accession of a new monarch. Is this ruler of his people, at the same time their highest representative, chosen by the people to fulfil his exalted office, or does he reign by virtue of some innate and transcendent excellence resident in him from birth? Do the people express freedom in choice or do they submit to something imposed on them? The Divine Right of kings was definitely ended in this country three centuries ago, but what of the right of birth? Here again a subtle compromise has been found. By virtue of an Act of Parliament, i.e. an agreement between people and monarch, the Privy Council, with the aid of various unspecified "prominent Gentlemen of Quality," take it on themselves to announce that a son has succeeded to his father, and their decision is universally acclaimed. It is as near the truth as the people's supposed free choice of their functional ruler, the Prime Minister. In neither case do they actively select a particular individual; what happens is that in certain definite circumstances they *allow* him to become their ruler. Their freedom lies in their reserving the right to reject him whenever he no longer plays the part allotted to him.

ERNEST JONES

A LONDON DIARY

THE most diverse opinions have been expressed to me during the last few days about the great demonstration which we have just witnessed. One sturdy Radical said that he was pleased about it because Germany had taught him that "if one drops the trappings of monarchy in the gutter, some gutter-snipe (or house-painter) picks them up." Two correspondents have suggested that in reporting criticism of the wireless I had showed "bad taste"—the phrase one uses for an emotional objection one has not analysed. Others write to say that they have heard the same criticism of the B.B.C. strongly expressed in suburbia. (On the musical side I see that the *Times* musical critic agrees with me. I must add that the B.B.C. reporting of the Funeral was admirably done.) Another observer is troubled about the psychological effects, because loyalty is always exploited by Conservatism and he fears that the Jubilee last year and the Funeral this year and the Coronation next will jointly "throw back all progressive causes for a long time to come." Several other correspondents have suggested that we are getting our "sense of values" wrong, that while expressing our natural feelings about the King's death we seem, to judge from the newspapers, to be forgetting the urgent needs of the living and, perhaps, forgetting too that the same mass loyalty may easily be aroused for less worthy objects. Was it not King George himself who said "the only war worth waging is against those evils which have throughout history brought upon the nations the horror of war"? Are we going to use this moment for a new attempt to remove the evils or are we going to satisfy our national feelings by rearmament?

* * *

This last, I think, touches the real point. I recall a famous

passage in which William James discusses the bad psychological effects of failing to translate a moment of spiritual exaltation into good action. If you have been deeply moved by a Beethoven symphony, he says, go and do something about it at once, even if it is only "saying a kind word to your aunt." The point remains valid when transferred from the personal to the national plane. If the things that we have read and said during the last week are sincere, the moment may be utilised for many fine projects—for a genuine attack on the slums, for instance. One immediately practical proposal I do venture to make here and now. We talk much of the unity of the Empire and of government by consent; a new constitution is to be introduced into India before the year is out. There is an old tradition that the accession of a new King should be signalised by a gesture of clemency. Would it not be an excellent gesture to release many hundreds of His Majesty's subjects, who are still political prisoners or détenus in India to-day? A large number of these have not been tried for any offence and are deprived of their liberty, not for criminal acts, but purely for their political opinions.

* * *

A royal funeral is a great occasion which people hate to miss. Therefore it is a great opportunity for making money. I hear of people who took a house or flat for the year so that they could let it at a profit for the one day. Wise householders on the route of the procession let their own rooms, getting in some cases as much as £100 per room. But most of the money seems to have gone to various theatrical agencies and auctioneers, who made themselves responsible for selling seats. I am told that in the early stages householders often got no more than 20 per cent. of the price of the seating accommodation. Those who held out until near the end were more likely to get 50 per cent. It was believed, and in some cases advertised, that a percentage of the price was to go to the hospitals, but inquiry at some of the houses showed that this was by no means universal. I should be interested to learn how much of the proceeds finally found its way to the hospitals. Breakfast and the Funeral at one well-placed hotel cost, I am told, fifty guineas per head. Seats on the route were advertised in the *Times* at prices from three to ten guineas. Elsewhere in the *Times* I noticed that very poor people were not allowed to make money out of the ceremony. It was pathetic to see the down-and-outs selling memorial cards. According to the *Times*' report, ten of them were charged at Bow Street with obstructing the pavement outside Westminster Hall. It was stated that "many hundreds or more were engaged in selling the cards. They stood at intervals of two or three yards, and owing to the competition among them considerable obstruction and annoyance to the public resulted." The magistrate (Mr. Dummett) discharged them with a caution. He said "This sad occasion is becoming an opportunity for unemployed men to make money in this way. It becomes an intolerable nuisance when people are pestered and obstructed, and I am going to stop it. It is getting beyond all bounds."

* * *

Last week's issue was already in the press when the news reached me of Clennell Wilkinson's death. He acted as Literary Editor of the *New Statesman* throughout the year 1929, and maintained the critical and journalistic traditions of his side of the paper with skill and spirit. It would be unjust to his memory—as he would have been the first to declare most roundly—to say that his temperament or his opinions fitted easily into the political framework at Great Queen Street. For Clennell Wilkinson, as he showed in every chapter of his excellent biographies—his *Nelson*, his *Dampier*, his *Prince Charles*, his *Prince Rupert*—was a man of the Right. Much of his strength and charm came from his capacity for combining very downright Tory views with a happy tolerance and indeed appreciation of quite opposite opinions. The virtue of these books of his lay largely in the fact that something of their subjects lived within his own personality, and when he talked of a Dampier or a Rupert it was as a man who breathed the same air that they breathed. And as a talker, Clennell Wilkinson excelled. He was a good, but courteous, hater, and his genuine detestation of cant or woolly-mindedness often gave his talk a pungency all his own; he could crystallise both his enjoyment and his combativeness into a phrase or an anecdote, with that peculiar zest which made of them what some of his friends would call a "Clennellism." His books and a great deal of his shrewd, lively, well-informed criticism will keep his name remembered. The echoes of his talk, the memory of his genial hospitality, the picture of him bending a little forward on the arms of his chair, listening, his glass in his hand and his fine head (which in his last years became oddly reminiscent of Henry James) thrust forward in attention or suspended attack, will long linger in the memories of those who knew, in intimacy, a man of rare generosity and kindliness.

* * *

Discussing the manners and accomplishments of Anglo-Indians the other day, a cultivated Hindu official told me that one day an English woman asked him in a superior voice whether he had heard of Shakespeare. I asked him whether she meant to be insulting or was just ignorant of the normal attainments of the educated Hindu. He said: "Neither; she was just showing off that she had heard of him herself." This seemed to me going too far, but I had nothing to say when he proceeded to tell me of an Anglo-Indian dinner at which he had been a guest. A very patronising padre gave him some intimate details about the Life Hereafter. Replying later, my Hindu friend said that though "Heaven lies about us in our infancy", he could not see why we should lie about Heaven in middle age. But the point of the story was that his remark so obviously bewildered his audience that he was forced to stop and explain that the poet Wordsworth had written an ode on "Intimations of Immortality" in which his quotation occurred.

* * *

But there seem to be other objections to living in India, if I am to judge from a report in the *Evening Standard*.

> "Cases of this kind are becoming too numerous," complained the magistrate, sentencing a man found guilty of biting off the end of a woman's nose "in a fit of temper."

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of this column goes this week to Mr. David C. Goldsmith.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

If Italy—which, in effect, is Signor Mussolini—were to win that war there is no end of the troubles ahead. The Blue Nile's source in Lake Tsana would then be "in pawn," and upon that priceless water depends the prosperity of our vast Sudan and of Egypt herself. So this Abyssinian tangle touches us very nearly, and King Edward's sympathy will lie naturally with the weaker side.—*Sunday Mail.*

Some years ago I had a wire-haired fox terrier (no longer with me, alas!) who accompanied me exquisitely in Dvorak's "Songs My Mother Taught Me" (sung in German). His faint, mournful wailing on the high notes of the song deeply moved all who heard it.—Letter in the *Times.*

Everyone knows that the liberal Koscialkowski-Kwiatkowski Cabinet is weak, and that it hangs on a precarious balance of liberal ministers against illiberal colonels, with Soznkowski and Rydz-Smigly in the background.—*The New Statesman and Nation.*

If you are clever with your fingers, why not emulate the original idea of a furniture designer I know? This is to attach monkey-nuts to gilded branches and twigs.—*Evening News.*

Meantime, the "League" (so-called) of Nations continues to display its amazing futility, which becomes every day more evident by the absurd antics of Messrs. Baldwin, Eden, Samuel Hoare, Gilbert Murray, Lord Cecil and other amiable but weak-brained enthusiasts.—*Gold Mining Record.*

A BRITISH SOCIALISM

II

THAT economic planning is essential to Socialism goes without saying. But if the planning is to be conducted in the interests of the people, as workers and consumers, it must not be left to the control of the owning classes. This signifies that the practical business men and the technical managers, those in possession of the necessary expert knowledge required for skilled planning, must be detached from their subservience to the owners of capital and pass into the service of the community. This in its turn will signify the transfer of the control of the capital from private hands to the public.

This statement plunges us at once into the turmoil of fears and misconceptions which befog the minds of men brought up in the old Liberal tradition—the attack on liberty and property. It is not necessary here to discuss at length the wild charge—that Socialism means the abolition or confiscation of private property. If well-conducted, it would bring a wide extension of private ownership of all sorts of goods for personal use, including such tools and materials as persons want for private working purposes. The transfer of business capital from private to public ownership would be attended by compensation that would secure a fixed income to former shareholders. Such considerations, however, are far from satisfying the assailants of Socialism who see in the proposed economic order the stoppage of all economic progress by the establishment of bureaucracy and the destruction of private enterprise. Now, what is the substance in these apprehensions? Suppose that the banks, the railways, the coal mines, and other key industries were nationalised, would it not be to the obvious interest of the public to leave the actual operation of these industries in the hands of their present experienced managers? Would a change in the personnel of the directorate be condemned as injurious, if persons of trained competence displaced the existing types of nominees? There are no grounds for supposing that a change of motive from profiteering to public service would injure the productivity of any of these industries. On the contrary, the restrictions on employment and output, which under certain conditions of monopoly or competition often serve the ends of profiteering, would cease to hamper production under public service. Even a moderately successful planning system would avoid the wastes of cyclical depressions, by using productive improvements to satisfy the growing wants of consumers. Nor is there any reason to accept the view that bureaucratic planning would dictate to the consumer what and how much of each product he must consume. It would be to the obvious advantage of planners to let consumers express their choices through an elasticity of demand on a price basis. Those who think this would not occur are obsessed by the cast-iron character they impute to bureaucracy. Official tyranny is, of course, always possible, if the substance of democracy is not maintained. But a great deal of nonsense is talked about public officials, who are for the most part far above the average layman both in intelligence and public spirit. If they were brought into regular contact and co-operation with practical managers and technicians, as they would be under the Socialism here envisaged, the combination would be an immense advantage to the running of all key and routine industries and services.

A word here about personal liberty in choice of occupation and in working conditions. It is quite true that under public planning workers would be set to the jobs where they would be most useful to the community: they could not freely choose their occupations. But does this involve real loss of liberty? Under existing circumstances the vast majority of workers have little or no choice of work. Few even know what they want to do when they attain the age of employment, and have little means of knowing what choice of jobs is open to them. Planning applied to the educational sphere should enable the planners to ascertain what boys and girls are by ability and aptitudes best fitted for various posts, and since most of them would naturally prefer the work they could do best, public needs and private choice would tend to harmony, and no real loss of personal liberty occurs.

It is clear, then, that a Socialism which should win the needed co-operation of the mental working classes and avert the violence of class-war must confine its early efforts to the nationalisation of key industries. How much farther should it seek to go? Is there any natural limit to the public ownership and planned operation of the economic system? Most "orthodox" Socialists would say "No." Planning, socially ordered production and consumption, must be applied to all economic processes, or waste and dislocation will take place. Now this view seems to me based upon a fundamental misconception of human equality and of the liberty related thereto. The validity of a planned economy, whether democratically or autocratically ordered, is based on the two assumptions that the plan is directed to the supply of needs which are common to all consumers and that the planner knows what these needs are. Now, those assumptions are valid just in so far as human beings are the same in their needs and wants and can, therefore, be supplied by standard goods produced by routine methods. Most of the necessaries and conveniences of life would conform to those conditions. In so far as such economic requirements are concerned the members of a community are closely similar, if not identical, in their needs and wants. But outside this identity there are important differences, numerous and various, which cannot be properly provided for by routine standardised processes. These personal individual qualities have higher conscious values than the common qualities, and, if they require economic nourishment, its provision demands the personal freedom of production outside the compass of collective planning. The satisfaction of artistic tastes is, of course, the most obvious example, for though these tastes can in some measure be standardised for mechanised supply, this process is generally recognised as the sterilisation of valuable qualities of personal creativeness. But it is not only these fine elements in personality that seem to war against standardisation and planning. Luxury and fashion are essentially changeable and incalculable tastes. If the full economy of Socialism could be attained for the supply of the common requirements of consumers upon a more or less equal level, the very success of this economy would open up the opportunities of more individual demands where changing tastes play a larger part. Now, it would seem undesirable to apply public planning to the processes which cater for these tastes. There would be a danger of attempting to limit personal tastes and eccentricities of demand in the interest of economical production. Some luxuries pass naturally into normal class standards and so become amenable to mass production. Others do not, and in any case the novel interests of personal tastes and their satisfaction cannot properly be met by methods that assume an equality which is not there. There must, then, in a dynamic society always exist an important outlying area of economic needs which should be left for its supply to private enterprise.

This does not, however, signify a large, free field for profitable capitalism. For the very nature of the wants left to this private enterprise is such as to give little scope for the use of machinery and other capital plant. The private enterprise would therefore consist chiefly in the free supply of manual and mental skill outside the planned system. There remains one other matter of controversy. Though Socialism, beginning with the key industries, would extend its planning ever more widely through the whole field for the supply of man's standard requirements, it might leave to private initiative, enterprise and risk the early stages in new industries, even where considerable capital is needed. Some Socialists argue that the change of heart under Socialism will evoke a sufficient spirit of enterprise, and that public provision for scientific and technical research can be relied upon to secure the discovery and application of new economies in existing industries as well as new processes for providing new types of consumables. But until this public spirit can be counted

on to take the place of the desire for private gain throughout the economic field, it may be well to give private capitalist enterprise a limited "run for its money" in this field. Such limitations of the power and scope of socialisation are no attempt to whittle down the application of the principle, but are based upon a recognition of the balance between social and individual interests and activities in the life of a community.

J. A. HOBSON

THE SPECTATOR

"I DOUBT," says a journalist, writing of the crowd that had collected near the Marble Arch to see King George's funeral go by, "if one per cent. of them saw anything of the procession other than through mirrors or periscopes." In spite of all the discomforts and disappointments to which he is subjected, I fancy that one of the most inextinguishable human characteristics is the passion of the spectator. As a spectator, man is an unconquerable optimist, a restless adventurer. To-day, if he were the lazy animal he sometimes seems, he could find plenty of excuses for avoiding the tedium of waiting and the pressure of crowds and for witnessing great scenes at second-hand through the beautiful photographs in the press, the news-reels in the cinemas, and through listening to the broadcasters. The greater the achievements of the camera, the film, and wireless, however, the more ardently people long to see the scenes depicted or described by means of them. Even while one is listening to a broadcast running commentary on a great event, one can scarcely repress the feeling: "I would give anything to be there." And yet one knows from experience that, unless one is in a favoured position, there are some of these events at which the spectator sees scarcely anything but other spectators.

Take the Derby, for example. I have gone to the Derby five times—perhaps, oftener—but I have seen the race only twice, having a seat in the press-box in the Junes in which Captain Cuttle and Sansovino won. The first year I went, I saw little more than the caps of jockeys flying past above the heads of the spectators in the distance. Another year, I stood at Tattenham Corner in a downpour of solid rain, and, as the horses tore past, did not even realise that Coronach was in front, such a tiny moment of the race was visible and so closely did his colours resemble those of Apple Sammy. Another year, I stood in an open car in the middle of the heath and watched the crowd that watched the crowd that watched the crowd that watched Felstead winning. But none of us where I stood knew who had won till a bookmaker got the news through the tictac men.

To-day, it is possible to follow the whole race by listening to the wireless—to see, or imagine one is seeing, every significant detail of it, as no ordinary spectator at Epsom can do. Yet who that has the time and energy would give up a chance of going to Epsom in order to see more of the race by proxy as a listener? Nothing seems quite real if we are not ourselves present at it. We have a sense of frustration in not being able to see with our eyes the things we hear described. We never envy the man who has listened-in on an exciting occasion as we envy a man who was present and saw it. The listener-in seldom boasts, or, if he does, he does so modestly. The spectator boasts of what he has seen as though it set him apart from his fellows—boasts inwardly and boasts outwardly. He boasts even if he has been present on a big occasion and has seen almost nothing.

Probably, it is the crowd itself that attracts the crowd. A great crowd is enough to make a great occasion. If everybody goes to see something, then everybody else wants to go too. This is the only explanation I can offer of the popularity of the Oxford and Cambridge boat-race. Not one spectator in a hundred cares a farthing about either university. Not one in a hundred is interested in rowing or, indeed, could tell good rowing from bad. Apart from this, the race is, as often as not, quite unexciting. In recent years, particularly, the race has commonly been won almost at the start and has developed into an exhibition of oarsmanship rather than a contest. Yet Londoners still line the riverbanks in their hundreds of thousands, and, being a crowd, become infected with excitement and roar their encouragement to their favoured crews. People go to the boat-race, it is sometimes said, because so much publicity is given to the training of the crews and their prospects in the newspapers beforehand. And there is certainly no other contest—outside horse-racing, perhaps—that is the subject of so many columns in the press weeks before it takes place. It seems to me, however, that the real reason of the popularity of the boat-race is that a tradition has grown up that it is one of the things the crowd goes to see. Even in country places people who have never seen a boat-race listen-in to the eye-witnesses' description of the Oxford and Cambridge race, not because they are interested in rowing, but because they are interested in whatever crowds of men and women are watching. If people cared for rowing they would go in Derby crowds to Henley, where they would see exciting races, and plenty of them, in a charming setting and with the spectators themselves as a charming part of the scene. But Henley has never been the resort of more than the minor mob and therefore the great mob has never felt any compulsion to go there.

As I grow older, I confess, I prefer seeing crowds in photographs and in the films to seeing them in real life. Or, if I see them in real life, I prefer seeing them from a window or balcony. I have no wish to be a spectator of any event in the world at the cost of standing for hours in a mob so densely packed that it is scarcely possible to get one's hand into a pocket for a match or a cigarette. I hate standing, in any case, but I hate standing a hundred times more in physical discomfort and in a position from which I know that, however much I may long to do so, I cannot escape for hours. I suffer, I imagine, from ochlophobia. The very fact that I cannot escape makes me long to escape. I feel that I am a prisoner, helpless, swayed this way and that by the pressure of thousands of people as helpless as myself. On the whole, if I were offered the choice between a day in a prison-cell and half a day as a spectator standing in the middle of a vast crowd, I think I should choose the day in the prison-cell.

Obviously, those who share my feelings in this respect must be in a minority. And yet I imagine that even many ochlophobes are drawn by the lure of the crowd and remember the horror of being helpless in a crowd only when they find themselves prisoners with no power to escape. When the crowd begins to sway, you will often hear women muttering hysterically and saying to each other: "I wish I hadn't come here." I imagine that a considerable number of the people who faint in the middle of crowds do so through sheer terror. Yet I have no doubt many of them, having fainted in one crowd, will a year later be unable to resist the temptation to join another.

I myself am conscious of this temptation. I still like to be on the edge of a crowd if I am able to move about freely. And in youth I could be happy in a crowd even when I was being carried off my feet. There is exhilaration in the company of a vast good-natured multitude. Some people find even more exhilaration in the company of a vast ill-natured multitude. Yet, if one is a spectator, one has often good reason for hating the crowd, since the crowd prevents one from seeing what one has come out to see. Even a man six foot high can see little of a street procession over the heads of a crowd standing before him thirty or forty deep. In every great crowd there must be tens of thousands of smaller men and women who can see nothing but the shoulders and hats of the people in front of them. Do they return home disappointed, swearing never to try to see a street procession again, and envious of their weaker brothers and sisters who followed the whole thing comfortably and in detail on the wireless? I fancy not. Probably in their secret hearts they congratulate themselves on having been on the spot at a great event as no mere listener is. Their very discomforts become an experience worth remember-

ing. The fact that they were unable to see over the heads of the crowd enables them to boast that they were part of a crowd so enormous that it was worth going miles to see. They feel a personal association with one of the great hours of history and that they have enjoyed a first-hand experience of this great hour such as no one could possess who was not physically present.

The desire for this experience will, I think, prevent the wireless and the films from ever becoming the ordinary man's method of following great events. He will use these only as a substitute for the real thing when he has no choice in the matter, or as a supplement to the real thing. He would rather see a small part of the real thing with his own eyes than a film of the whole of the real thing. He would rather even see only the crowd that was imperfectly seeing the real thing than listen to a perfect record of it over the wireless. In this, I think, he is wise. Indolence, age and ochlophobia make me turn to the wireless and the cinema as substitutes —excellent substitutes—for reality. I may tell myself that few things could have been much more deeply moving than the wireless transmission of those last scenes at Windsor. But the thousands of spectators in the London streets who saw nothing had experiences never to be had in the quiet and comfort of one's home. How I envy them their patience, their invincible spirit, and their memories! Y.Y.

WILL THE FALL OF FASCISM MEAN BOLSHEVISM?

[One of the most common objections given—in private at least—to the imposition of serious sanctions against Italy, is that the overthrow of Mussolini would mean Bolshevism in Italy. Particular interest, therefore, attaches to the views on this point of people who have intimate knowledge of the Italian people and of the economic and social structure of Italy. This week we print the opinion of Don Luigi Sturzo, who was the founder of the Popular Party which played so important a part in Italian politics during the years immediately preceding Fascism.—ED. *N.S. & N.*]

FOR some years it has been repeated, even by knowledgeable people, that the fall of Fascism would lead straight to Bolshevism. What they mean by Bolshevism is not very clear, but in a vague way they envisage communism or the abolition of private property, an anti-religious conflict (a prospect which alarms them less), and in a word, a Dictatorship of the Proletariat, or it may be merely a dictatorship of the Left—in countries where there is still a Right which fears to lose its power.

When I was a boy, in common parlance in Italy the word "Republic" used to arouse more or less the same complex of feelings. I remember a head-master, who, if a boy was insubordinate or disorderly, would shout: "Is this a Republic?" When in 1876 in Italy the Right fell and the Left came into power, the belief was held and propagated that the newly unified Italy was on the verge of collapse. To-day, reading de Kerillis' articles in the *Echo de Paris*—a continual S O S from the perils of a victory of the *Front Populaire* in the forthcoming elections—I feel as though I were reading the articles written in Italy in 1900, at the time of the victory of the "people's parties," consisting of Radicals, Socialists and Republicans, who had united to prevent Conservative reaction from continuing a policy of laws of exception and martial law.

But neither in 1876 nor in 1900 did Italy collapse, nor was private property abolished, nor was crisis more acute than at other periods. Not till 1922 was there a revolution—the Fascist revolution, supported and rendered possible by the Conservatives and the army.

It was said that Fascism then saved Italy from Bolshevism. But in reality, as Mussolini himself then declared, the Bolshevik peril, if it ever existed—which we deny—had completely blown over in 1921, when Giolitti held a General Election and Mussolini entered the Chamber by legal means, with a group of thirty-four Deputies who formed his Party.

But however we may judge the past, from the republicanism of the Risorgimento up to to-day, can it be truly said that the fall of Fascism will mean the advent of Bolshevism, that is, the Dictatorship of the Proletariat?

The inauguration of a dictatorial regime demands before all else that the army and money should be controlled by the presumed dictator, even if that dictator be the proletariat. Let us suppose a rising of the masses. It is certain that neither the army nor the banks would be in their hands, but only in the hands of a Government which, albeit of the Left, would be desirous of some form of order. The more so since the Italian army would neither be in a state of disintegration, like the Russian army in 1917, nor humiliated by defeat like the German army of 1919. The latter in any case did good service to the Weimar Republic, in re-establishing order and restoring the organism of the State.

Money? It will be a difficulty to find money in Italy after the present Italo-Abyssinian war. A Bolshevist Government, supposing that such a Government could ever be installed, would have to face monetary and economic difficulties of such magnitude that it would necessarily have to seek the collaboration of the bourgeois classes and would be unable to bring any radical change in the system. In such a case there would be Bolshevism only in name but not in fact.

But this is not all. In an Italy where small ownership, both rural and urban, extends to the peasants and even to the artisans, communist collectivisation would be impossible. As for big estates and big industry, it is enough to note that all the measures taken by the Fascist Government have served to cancel their character of private property and bring them under State or semi-State ownership. To-day in many cases the owners have been reduced to being mere stewards for the banks and the banks themselves to being the managers of money or bonds for the Bank of Italy, or the Ministry of Finance, or the Treasury, or other central public bodies.

But what would prevent a Bolshevist dictatorship, in the anti-bourgeois and collectivist sense of the words, would be the social structure of Italian life, which, though constricted by Fascism, has retained its fundamental characteristics. Italy is three-quarters agricultural, with a consequent network of crafts, small industries, and subsidiary industries, all inspired by a conservative and family spirit.

This agricultural zone has always been the axis of Italian politics, though these might swing now to the Left, now to the Right. But Italian agriculture carries with it various economic and social problems that are still unsolved and which must be solved. Such is the problem of the *latifondo* in the South and in Sicily, and that of the agricultural casual labourer. Once these problems have been solved, the social structure of Italy will become sounder and more immune from any idea of Communism.

Italian industries are few; they are in a bad way and the Geneva sanctions are hitting them hard. The industrial worker, who lives in the big cities like Turin, Milan and Genoa, a sturdy and intelligent class which used to be mainly Socialist, is the greatest sufferer from unemployment and the economic crisis, and it is he who to-morrow will feel the need for the industries to resume their former prosperous activity. Will the industries of the future be private or State-owned? Both. Otherwise worse and still more insoluble crises would result.

All this will demand initiative and responsibility. Will there be men in Italy capable of assuming such responsibility in the event of a collapse of the Fascist dictatorship? What will the governing classes do? Those who have political and moral responsibilities to-day? Those who will wish to defend a given economic order? Have they all perished? Are they all submerged?

This is the tune that we have been hearing for more than ten years, every time that the Fascist regime has been questioned, theoretically if not practically. If Fascism had really been able to put a stop to all thought and all energy, to reduce all to the thought and energy of a single man (and him mortal like ourselves), it would have perpetrated not only the greatest moral and political crime, but beyond question the greatest feat of human perversion and the liquidation of a whole people. But all this is nonsense and falsehood. Italy, even in a state of humiliating subjection or fanatical exaltation, retains her moral and intellectual energies and her capacity for redemption, like the France of Napoleon the Little. The peril of a Bolshevik catastrophe is remote, not only on account of the resistance of the moral and economic structure of Italy, but because we may count on will and strength to overcome the reactions and convulsions entailed by the passage from one regime to another.

But will there be such a passage? Is it near or distant? This is another problem, far more complex and assuredly much less clear.

It is foolish to play the prophet. But every period of exception has its end. However we may look at Fascism, whether we laud it or condemn it, we cannot see in it anything but a period of exception.

LUIGI STURZO

Correspondence

THE B.B.C.

SIR,—May I be allowed to amplify Critic's comment on the B.B.C. programmes since the King's death? Surely the policy of maintaining silence (except for Mr. Baldwin's address) on January 21st, and again on the afternoon and evening of January 28th, showed a lamentable absence of imagination. Here, I suggest, was a time for solemn music; no one would have wished the dance-band to play as usual, but it would be easy to mention numbers of works most appropriate to days of mourning (everyone who listened to the funeral service broadcast from Windsor is likely to agree that it was made most moving by the beauty of music admirably executed). It is impossible to suppose that the occasion took the B.B.C. by surprise—indeed, I have reason to believe that plans were, very properly, prepared several years ago. Moreover, as the music critic of the *Times* pointed out, during the whole week there was a deplorable lack of the noble music which would have given dignified expression to the national grief. Where many of us expected to hear Bach and Mozart, Beethoven and Berlioz, we were treated to a thin stream of sentimental restaurant music.

Even more surprising was the substitution on January 21st of a few verses from the Apocalypse for the daily religious service, and the absence of any religious service at all on the following morning. Surely, Sir, this was conspicuously an occasion for enriching rather than curtailing or abandoning the usual religious rites.

The only explanation I can find for these deficiencies is a Puritanism (still surviving in Sir John Reith's native land) which regards music as frivolous, not to say, papistical.

Another, though less widely noticed, mistake was the closing on January 21st of the Victoria and Albert and other museums, which suggests a similar official view of art as a trivial decoration rather than as an enrichment of life. But it was interesting to notice that the National Gallery remained open, and I found there an unusual number of visitors who found in art a satisfaction in no way incongruous to a day of mourning.

It may, however, be urged, in view of the memorial poems which have appeared, that there is something to be said in favour of silence.

CHARLES BELL

SIR,—I hope that Critic and his friends and the occupants of the "working-class houses" visited by his friend are not in the majority, for my wife and I have nothing but gratitude for the way in which the B.B.C. has handled this sad and stirring occasion. As for "other kinds of news as well," they gave us the news from Abyssinia, Egypt, Geneva, Paris, and so on.

I have only lately succumbed to the wiles of the wireless, and I still grudge the time spent on it; but the occasion was not usual. And, as my identity is of no importance, I sign myself

Stirlingshire. GRATEFUL

POLITICS AND THE OLYMPIC GAMES

SIR,—In the discussion as to Great Britain's participation in the Berlin Olympic Games there is some suggestion that those who are advocating our withdrawal are "dragging politics into sport." May I point out that the case for our withdrawal is precisely that the present German Government has so dragged politics into sport as to make nonsense of the whole conception of the Games?

No doubt those who sympathise with the present German Government will be less ready to believe this than those who do not, but there can be no contention that the question is an improper one to raise. The International Olympic Committee raised it itself soon after the present German Government came into power. It was concerned, not with the development of sports organisations in connection with a political party (that is in itself a perfectly proper thing), but with the real fear that the National-Socialist Party might so use its political power against sportsmen who did not share its views as to violate the clause of the Olympic Charter which declares that the Games shall assemble the amateurs of all nations on an equal footing.

Now there are some who argue that this clause means merely that nations shall be treated equally at the Games and that the way in which the German team is selected is no concern of ours. But unfortunately for this argument the International Committee has shown that such is not its own interpretation. For it demanded, and received, assurances from the German Government that there should be no principle of exclusion of Jewish athletes from the German team; and in May, 1934, these assurances were amplified to include the promise for proper training facilities for any athlete to have a chance of representing Germany.

We are therefore committed to the principle, and the only matter for discussion is the evidence as to whether the German Government has kept its word. The evidence that it has not done so, except to include one or two Jews in its team for purely "window-dressing" purposes, is overwhelming. It has been set out in full in the *Manchester Guardian* (December 5th and 6th, 1935) and in the letter of Judge Mahoney to the *New York Times* (October 21st, 1935). Jews have been debarred from the great majority of sports clubs, and reasonable facilities for training have been denied them. The sports movement of Germany is being used for the indoctrination of the unfortunate athletes with Nazi "philosophy," and this has been done quite officially and explicitly. No one who understands the beliefs of the present rulers of Germany will be surprised that they should use sports for their primary purpose, the welding of the nation together until it has one set of political beliefs and a united readiness for war. It has given the assurances that were necessary because it wants the prestige of the Games at Berlin. It has failed to honour them because to do so would involve a reversal of its whole policy.

What ought we to do? There are some who feel that in asking for the assurances we have done all that we can be expected to do. Even though we know they were valueless we could hardly press the matter further. This seems both cynical and foolish. Either we were serious, and intended to be taken seriously, or we were not interested and should have done nothing. To pretend that we are satisfied if we are not, will be to invite contempt.

If we consider that the assurances have been dishonoured we should withdraw from the Games at Berlin. Many would agree with such a proposal if they did not feel that it would jeopardise the whole future of the Olympic movement, which has done magnificently in realising an ideal of fair competition and international good-sportsmanship in the past. The Games might conceivably still be taken elsewhere this summer, though that would be difficult now. They might be postponed for a year, though that would spoil the symmetry of the four-year Olympiad. But if neither of these is possible, we ought to withdraw. Much responsibility rests with those of the International Committee who have been complacent in accepting the speeches of the German representatives at their face value, and the only way now to reassert the fundamental Olympic principle of equal competition between athletes of differing races and opinions is for this country to act. If we do not so use the immense influence that this country has in the world of sport, then we must resign ourselves to the fact that the vital spirit will have gone out of the Games. It certainly cannot find expression at the Games next summer in Berlin. And the Olympic ceremonies, which were coming to represent something genuine in international equality and fair-play, will become so much mumbo-jumbo until, no doubt, they are swept away in the next war.

W. L. ELVIN

THE PLIGHT OF THE HIGHLANDS

SIR,—I have read Mr. Scott Moncrieff's article on the Plight of the Highlands with interest and some astonishment. Mr. Moncrieff has not been at pains to verify his quotations and consult his authorities. The serio-comic incident to which he refers occurred at Dornoch, not Dingwall. Dingwall is sufficiently comic at the moment. The "Board" of Agriculture to which he also refers ceased to exist as a Board some years ago, and his remarks on its activities should not mislead anyone in Scotland.

What astonishes me is that Mr. Moncrieff apparently assumes that the Highlands are in a worse condition than ever before, and that little has been attempted to improve these conditions.

Mr. Moncrieff and the readers of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION might maintain a balanced outlook if they kept in mind some relevant considerations such as these.

More taxpayers' money has been spent in the Highlands in the last thirty years in proportion to the population than in any other part of Great Britain. The expenditure has been upon Education, Medical Services, Building Loans, Land Settlement, Live Stock Improvement Schemes, Roads, Piers, Harbours, and subsidies to steamer services. As one small example of the taxpayers'

benevolence, where else in Britain can a man who wants to build a house get the materials at wholesale prices carriage free?

Mr. Moncrieff might read the Reports of the Department of Agriculture and particularly the published Reports of the Public Accounts Committee of the House of Commons.

Partly as a result of this expenditure, the housing conditions have greatly improved and the general well-being of the people is on a higher level than at any previous period. About this there can be no doubt. Mr. Moncrieff seems to regard the depopulation of the Highlands as a misfortune. Whose misfortune? The Highlands have always been over-populated in relation to their natural resources.

The depopulation of the Highlands is chiefly due to the natural desire of the young, well-educated, intelligent people to move to where they can hope for a higher standard of living, greater amenities and a more or wider intellectual life. Where dancing is taboo and the Ministers censure a man for allowing his wife to attend a bazaar, the young do not thrive.

No doubt more can be done to develop the Highlands, but it cannot be well done by obscuring the facts, or declining to face reality.

ROBERT GREIG

Shaws, Barnton, Midlothian.

[Mr. Scott Moncrieff writes: Sir Robert Greig accuses me of not verifying my quotations or consulting my authorities. In support of this he points out that I inadvertently referred to Dingwall instead of Dornoch in a reference of no importance to my thesis, and that I have spoken of the Department of Agriculture as the Board, which I did deliberately since that is the name under which all its important activities were inaugurated. Sir Robert makes no other reference to my contentions, but proceeds to summarise the good intentions of the Board, sprinkling them with vague and inaccurate statements whose function he exactly defines himself in his concluding words: . . . "obscuring the facts and declining to face reality."

To say that more of the taxpayers' money has been spent in the Highlands in the last thirty years in proportion to the population than in any other part of Britain does not clarify the facts. In the first place, no such statement may be made with certainty without taking into account the fact that many Government activities which are nominally spread over the whole country are of no importance to the Highlanders. In the second, it was Government neglect over the preceding hundred and fifty that has resulted in so much needing to be done in the Highlands to-day. In the third, the only value of money lies in how it is spent, and much of the Board's money was misapplied or reached other pockets than those of the crofter. As to Sir Robert's tale of the benevolence of the taxpayer (who does not, apparently, include the crofter himself): that is very queer. Does the Government not grant subsidies to housing schemes all over the country? And does not the stone house built by the crofter represent a greater national asset than the jerry-built fabrics that have brought prosperity to contractors in urban areas? Also any medical services granted to the crofter are only a belated equivalent of the National Health Insurance Scheme, for which he is not eligible.

It is no doubt a source of consolation to those who have failed to check the depopulation of the Highlands to say that they are over-populated anyhow: but it is none the less untrue. And Sir Robert's talk of the young people wanting to go to the towns is representative of the kind of half-truth with the aid of which it is easy to "decline to face reality." There is, unfortunately, evidence to render suspect the easy statement that "the general well-being of the people is on a higher level than ever before": if only in respect of the unwholesome food that has replaced a diet that may have been plain but that was nourishing. As to land-settlement: it is because that work has been so superficial and so markedly unsuccessful that the Highland Leagues have now been formed. Between 1912 and 1926 there were 13,710 applications for smallholdings, of which only 3,188 were granted.

If Sir Robert had read my article more carefully he would have seen that it was not an attack, but simply a plea for the Government's inaugurating a more comprehensive scheme. One that would see the settlement of crofters as the beginning, not the end, of its responsibilities, and would then proceed to organise markets and the co-operative distribution of necessities; that would protect fishing rights; that would develop hydro-electric power for the Highlanders themselves and for such industries as could certainly be started amongst them; and last, but not least, that would treat them as fellow countrymen and not, because they are a peasant minority, as a quaint but helpless survival, in need of driblets of charity from the "benevolent taxpayer."—ED. *N.S. & N.*]

IRISH HOUSEKEEPING

SIR,—I am intrigued but, I fear, not in the least abashed by W. P. C.'s strictures upon my article, because his "facts" only confirm my diagnosis of the economic policy of the Free State.

(1) Mr. De Valera's policy of an "Irish Ireland," he says, is based "on blood rather than brain." Here is one of those intellectual bisections in which certain minds delight, but which take us away from reality. I thought I made it clear that national sentiment—which W. P. C. prefers to call "nationalism" and, as such to condemn—is the driving force as it must be for any constructive enterprise. (Does not W. P. C. yet realise, by the way, that British appeals to other nations to be internationally-minded in their economics only mask our peculiar form of nationalism?) Whether or not I "support" the policy of the De Valera regime is immaterial, especially since I am not an Irishman. *Je constate seulement*. (2) W. P. C. complains that Mr. De Valera's policy is not a Socialist one. But I never said it was—indeed I expressly stated that "there is no trace of Socialism . . . The inspiration comes rather from the Papal Encyclicals dealing with social policy." Consequently the criticism that "the capitalists have him [De Valera] well under thumb," whether true or untrue, leaves me cold. W. P. C. is entitled to his opinion that "a community of peasant proprietors is a force of ignorance, reaction and superstition," but, after all, it is only an opinion. Let him fight that out with Mr. Chesterton. The only moral I was seeking to point in my article—which was, I repeat, a factual diagnosis not an essay in propaganda—is that there are perhaps more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in your nineteenth-century economic philosophy. (3) The decentralising of industry in the Free State is a deliberate act of *social* policy. It is no good, therefore, damning it as being economically unwise or contrary to the canons of economic science. I leave your readers to decide whether my modest *reportage* or W. P. C.'s emotional distress is the more "based on blood rather than brain!"

W. HORSFALL CARTER

THE "NEW ZIONISTS"

SIR,—Mr. S. Landman's mere declaration that the Jabotinsky movement is not Fascist will convince no one. When I was in Palestine two years ago, everybody, friends as well as enemies of the Revisionists or "New Zionists," took it for granted that the Revisionists are Fascists. I did not know that they themselves object to Fascist ideology; they may, however, resent the appellation because it is in such disrepute. Whether because of philosophic kinship or for other reasons, the Italians have given this movement encouragement.

I regret that my casual mention of this matter in my article on Italy gave Mr. Landman the opportunity of making propaganda for his "great humanitarian movement" in your paper. I know many persons who would laugh at his assertion that the Vienna Congress of the Jabotinskyites represented the "largest number of Zionist voters ever recorded." Gershon Agronsky, editor of the Jerusalem *Palestine Post*, demolished the claim in a letter to the *Times* at the time.

LOUIS FISCHER

Moscow.

REWARDS FOR GOOD DRIVERS

SIR,—The suggestion made by your correspondent, Margaret I. Cole, in your issue of January 18th, relative to the giving of awards to safe motorists has in principle been in operation for almost twenty years in the case of paid drivers, in the form of a Safe Driving Competition promoted by the National "Safety First" Association. Awards are given for driving without blameworthy accident over given periods. The first year of accident immunity brings a diploma, and five consecutive years earn a silver medal. Ten years' success is recognised by a gold medal, and there are higher awards for longer periods. In 1935 over 80,000 drivers were entered and a special effort is being made to bring this number up to 100,000 during 1936. Such well-known undertakings as the General Post Office, the London Passenger Transport Board, and Railway Companies, are among the largest entrants, whilst municipalities and industrial undertakings throughout the country speak highly of the benefits which they have received from the Competition. The Competition is not open to owner-drivers, but there are several other schemes available to them, such as "The Order of the Road," etc.

Terminal House,
52 Grosvenor Gardens,
London, S.W.1

J. A. A. PICKARD,
General Secretary, The National
"Safety First" Association

VOLCANOES

SIR,—It appears to be the characteristic of some scientists to assume that every theory that is not very modern is untrue. Arrhenius's theory of volcanic action is by no means despised by geologists. I am well aware that there are many other theories, and that there are factors which contribute to volcanic action of which I have made no mention. This was not possible within the limits of a short article. It is sufficient to state that the phenomena exhibited by volcanoes are largely produced by the escape of imprisoned water and other gases from the incandescent and fluid rock. The high temperatures within the earth's crust and the presence of water and gas imprisoned within the rocks will continue to invite the researches of geologists and the multiplication of theories. My endeavour in my article was to give an indication of *one* such theory. E. L. GRANT WATSON

Whenham, Rogate.

Miscellany

THE LAST FLIGHT OF VINCENZO DE AMICIS

A FANTASY

SOME excitement has been caused at Djibouti by the arrival of an Italian deserter, Salvatore Verga, who escaped last week over the frontier into French Somaliland. His story, if true, throws an ironic sidelight on the fate of the young Vincenzo de Amicis whose plane was brought down on the Northern Front a fortnight since.

Vincenzo de Amicis of Perugia, a pilot of twenty-two, was one of the fieriest and gayest spirits of his squadron. His fervid devotion to the Duce and his intrepidity in the air brought him rapidly to the notice of his superiors and of Count Ciano himself. Once already he had been brought down by engine-failure near Dessié, a few days after the bombing of the Red Cross there, and only five minutes after his observer had unloaded their own cargo of bombs on a group of Abyssinian huts. The valley was rocky; one wing-tip caught a thorn-tree, the machine somersaulted, and the observer was killed outright. De Amicis himself crawled half-stunned from the wreckage just in time to see his pursuers silhouetted on the ridge-top against the red sunset. With a supreme effort he reeled to his feet and drew his revolver; but in his giddiness the first shot went wide, and before he could fire another the weapon was knocked out of his hand from behind. It was with some difficulty that the Abyssinian commander saved him from the red rage of the rest. Even in his dazed condition de Amicis could not help noticing (so he related afterwards) one gigantic Ethiopian, who seemed to have suffered some particular loss in the bombardment, with his great cheeks incongruously beblubbered like a child's. Prevented from spearing the prisoner, he suddenly turned and gripped one of the thorn-trees on the hillside, shaking it and moaning, as a terrier with a rat. Still faint and stumbling, de Amicis was dragged away. After half a mile he collapsed. But at a word from the commander two of the soldiers, now stolid once more, took off their coats, buttoned them inside out, passed two rifles through the sleeves, and set him on this improvised stretcher. When he opened his eyes he was back in the village where he had dropped his bombs, with an opportunity of judging for himself of their effectiveness. His mind flashed back at once, he told Verga, to some photographs of the Messina earthquake in an album at home, which had been the nightmare-fascination of his childhood. Only here, in this chaos of wrecked homes and poor possessions flung piecemeal, lit now in the fast falling darkness by red torchlight and the flames of burning débris, lay bleeding and still screaming bodies beyond the realism of any photograph. Vincenzo de Amicis was suddenly and violently sick.

When he looked up, he read on his captors' faces a look of contemptuous disgust. They began a heated altercation in undertones; and their glances made it clear enough that he was the subject. Ten minutes later he found himself pushed into a hut that was still intact, but for a ragged hole torn in the roof; a sentry with fixed bayonet drew a heavy mat across the doorway: he was alone.

"You can guess," he told Verga, "that my meditations were not rose-coloured. Should I be beheaded? I almost hoped so, for fear of worse. All the stories I had ever heard of African tortures, all the photographs of Abyssinian mutilations that I had ever seen, danced before my eyes. Should I be buried to the neck in the sun with my eyelids cut off; or smeared with honey and left to the ants? After all I had just done to them I could hardly wonder. Odd how repentant one feels when punishment is at the door. I had never seen a bombed village; I could still hear a woman's voice screaming with pain somewhere in the darkness; I realised that if I had done as much in Kentucky even, I should probably have had kerosene poured over me and lighted. Or if Abyssinians had done it in Italy . . . I cursed myself for not having shot myself in time.

"I was fearfully thirsty. I called to my guard and made signs. After half an hour they brought some water, not over-clean, and a hunk of raw meat. It was uneatable, but reassuring. I little guessed what was before me."

He dozed off, exhausted; an hour or so later he woke with a start, wondering where he was. The woman's voice had sunk to a distant whimper; a hyena was crying on the outskirts, attracted no doubt by the scent of the dead; but what had wakened him was the risen moon, now dimly lighting through the torn roof that other half of the hut, which had been in darkness. He was a good deal surprised to find himself face to face with a rough image of a mother and child. Something in the protective gesture of the mother's arms "made me remember at once," (to use his own words) "with a sudden pang of homesickness, Raphael's *Madonna della Seggiola* and my happy student-days in Florence wandering in the Uffizi." But such statuary seemed odd in an Ethiopian hovel. He was puzzled, too, in the dim light by the curiously narrow shape of the two heads, suggesting the work of some modern admirer of El Greco. And the right arm drawn sheltering round the child seemed draped in a strange ragged fringe—was it some queerly realistic idea of the Madonna as a poor beggar-woman? He rose at last and walked unsteadily across to look more closely. The next moment he did not scream—he felt, he said, as if his own silence had grown suddenly ten times deeper. The Madonna and Bambino were not in bronze or ebony. They were dead. Those narrowed heads were a product, not of modern art, but of modern science—from nape to temple one side of each had been blown away. The ragged drapery of the right forearm was flesh that hung in ribbons. In the moonlight the dead eyes looked quietly at him, like glazed black pebbles; now lightening, now darkening, with a faint mockery of life, as the small silvery clouds drifted in peaceful progress across the midnight sky.

They found him next morning hunched in a corner, his eyes hidden in his hands. He looked up. A white-cloaked new-comer, clearly of higher rank, was sternly upbraiding the commander of the night before. Then, turning to de Amicis, he added in halting Italian: "I am sorry, Signore. It was not unjust that you should have to look at what you had done. But I am sorry. Come." De Amicis rose and followed. Despite himself—as if some unseen hand had forced his head round—he gave a last look at the dead. In the daylight the semblance of dignity was gone; there remained mere mutilated horror. Already his nostrils sickened at a slight taint of decay.

He was led off, on mule back, under guard; towards noon they passed the still smoking ruins of the hospital of Dessié; near sunset they reached a sort of abandoned quarry with a few sentries round the edges—there was a sound of Italian laughter—he found himself with half a dozen fellow-prisoners. Their spirits were still good. They had no doubts about final victory and they did not look beyond. But gradually before the face of this new-comer their laughter faded; he

answered their questions in a lifeless monotone; but he asked none. Gradually they drifted away and left him brooding in his corner. Only one, Salvatore Verga, a soldier in the Corps of Engineers, tried to win his confidence and heard at last the whole story. Telling it, Vincenzo broke down completely. "By degrees," says Verga, "through the long hot days, while the others paced up and down, or hunted scorpions under the stones, or played cards for their last centesimi, or tried to chip out a colossal silhouette of the Duce on the rock-wall, I trusted him with my own secret. He had been as passionate for the Duce and Italy as an Early Christian for God and the Church; it was hard for him to face the impossibility of serving both. But he was impressed by the story of the young Lauro de Bosis (of whom he had never heard—such is the state of truth in Italy), flying to drop his leaflets over Rome with the sure knowledge that he must himself fall into the Mediterranean on his return. He came to see that others were risking their lives for Communism with just as much idealism as his, and a good deal more sense of reality."

A week later they were heavily bombed by their own aeroplanes; three of them were killed or wounded; but Verga, de Amicis, and another escaped in the confusion, while their guards were busy taking cover; and, travelling by night, succeeded in regaining the Italian lines.

They were fêted to death: but Vincenzo remained a death's head at the feast. He could not work calmly underground, like Verga. His lost faith poisoned him. He became savagely reckless in expressing opinions that may be commonplaces in Italy a year hence, but are deadly as yet. He crowned all by demanding to be sent home. He was told that "home" would mean the Lipari Islands, if not a firing-squad. An officer of high rank who knew his family interceded for him, reasoned with him. Sullenly de Amicis gave in. He found himself detailed for to-morrow's raid.

Next day the troops in the Adowa sector were treated to an extraordinary spectacle. A dozen machines appeared, flying in formation southward. They were greeted with the usual cheers. Suddenly one of them broke from its place in the V of the formation and began circling in the sky independently. The amazement grew as it was seen to be sky-writing. "P-A-C-E" it spelt, like the hand on Belshazzar's wall, while the rest of the squadron, following its leader, wheeled in a wide circle, obviously bewildered. Being on a level with the letters, they could not read them. For miles round many of the troops, thinking the war was over, began to cheer. With an oath a black-bearded general stopped his car and shouted to the operator of his portable wireless on the seat behind. As the one message unfolded itself in the heavens, a second began feverishly tapping itself out from the earth below. "P-I-U D-I S-A-N-G-" curled the white smoke-wreaths against the African blue; when suddenly on the astonished ears of the watching troops broke the rat-tat-tat-tat of machine-gun fire. In the middle of its final E the solitary plane gave an abrupt lurch forward and swooped headlong, burning. Men held their breath for the crash; with the splitting detonation of a hundred bombs at once, it came.

The widowed Signora Maddalena de Amicis of Perugia has received an autograph letter from the Duce, together with the medal which her gallant son "won, though he never wore it, the day he crashed in flames on the scene of Italy's vindicated glory, the field of Adowa—himself a shining beacon for all Fascist youth." Only repeated official hints have prevented Signore Gabriele d'Annunzio from composing an ode on the subject.

"As for me," added Signore Verga, "I found it necessary soon after to take leave of the Italian Army. A certain eminent Colonel with whom I had been collaborating against the Duce, discovered that I did not share the view of his own circle, that the ideal successor would be the Prince of Piedmont. He promptly betrayed me. Fortunately he was not quite prompt enough. Hence my excursion across the frontier. I leave to-morrow to work elsewhere and see to it that Vincenzo de Amicis shall not have died in vain." F. L. LUCAS

EXTRACTS FROM A JOURNAL, JANUARY, 1936

THE pleasure, when one is revisiting a town, of recognising a dog in the street.

I lost my way in the conversation and went home.

Boxing Day in the country: "I always say a good walk and then a cup of tea, to blow the cobwebs away."

One can drop to the bottom of an abyss: it seems the end. But then, without calamity, one plunges down other abysses—lower and lower, and one is still where one was—the same hopes, the same regrets, the same newspaper and egg for breakfast.

After rain, a south-west wind had dried the pavements, leaving pools in which, as I walked along, I saw clouds and clear sky through the holes at my feet.

At night, a child crying in a shop arcade because it had lost its balloon, which a drunkard with wild gestures was trying to recapture.

The house opposite is empty, its windows black; but not for long. It will lose this dignity.

How much of the Orient there is in an old woman with her cat or her umbrella, a man doing sums as he sits smoking in his window beside a palm-tree!

New Year resolutions:

To read less and write more.

Morally and intellectually, to care less for keeping up appearances.

To fatten on stupidity—the bread of life.

At certain times of the day, to retrieve my childhood, or I shall be in danger of losing it altogether.

To write: A book on Utopias, a history of travel, a novel of childhood.

To draw more from routine. Every morning, for example, to ignore the hated features enlarged in the shaving-mirror; to enjoy instead the suave arctic contours, and the adjacent white of walls, towels, basin.

To be ambitious in small things.

"How's the world using you, old chap—how are you getting on?"

"Not so bad, and you?"

"Fine."

"And your wife?"

"The wife's champion."

"I don't know that I quite like all this League of Nations talk."

"No, and the weather's bad for golf."

"Still, Christmas."

"Yes, yes, mustn't grumble, you know."

(Two oxen, side by side in the tube, smoking cigars and reading newspapers.)

The impulse to destroy one's own happiness, to anticipate ironically the *chute* of every emotion.

How many filthy streets, and ruined faces, the sun reveals, making them more wretched, and yet with a touch of dignity.

The art of writing is not, as many people think, to expand your ideas, but to squeeze them, like a ball of paper which will come to life when you open your hand.

Rien que les heures—delightful title, I feel it should be mine. But how on earth am I to translate it?

During dinner they talked of nothing but food.

The artist has no public.

An old woman appeared, nodding uninterruptedly, among the Christmas decorations of the bar: "I'm going to Short's afterwards for a bottle of Scotch whisky. Their Scotch and gin and port, beautiful. And their Irish, it's as soft as milk to drink—really it's quite like milk."

A lady in evening dress and her little boy sat opposite me in the bus. They were going to a party—fresh, scented and gaily dressed. The boy carried his mother's silver shoes.

She was charming until a young girl got in and sat looking at her. Then her face drooped, the lines round her mouth deepened, and she sat out the rest of the journey in silence.

Hyde Park Corner at night. The small groups, clustering and melting under the trees: on one side the illumination of Marble Arch, on the other grey fields stretching towards the Serpentine in the moonlight. An Irishman, purpling: "The love of God, ma'am? What is it? Show me it! Now don't prevaricate, I'm a lawyer, just answer my questions."

If you must carry a watch, don't submit to its tyranny; allow the tick so long as it soothes, but do not be haunted by that terrifying symbol.

In a post-office: "I dreamt I saw the Queen last night, and she was looking so well."

Pavement artists at the end of their line of drawings: One, with a breastful of medals, a corporal beside his recruits—his torso rising unexpectedly out of the pavement, for he has no legs; another sits like Buddha; a third squats forward like a toad, catching the eye of the passer-by.

Dodging down a street-market the other day, I seemed to be in a parrot house; people croaked and shrieked at me as I went past and I expected one of them to bite me. Some cries: "Try them, they're lovely!" (saucepans). "Come and buy, my dear, come and buy!" "A bleeding tanner the lot!" Slit rabbits, moist rounds of meat with saffron fat, trays of dull artificial-silk stockings, a flower barrow, a cod's head looking up from the gutter. Stout women with shopping bags walk ecclesiastically along, touching everything, pronouncing.

Sometimes in the afternoon a chime of starlings settles on the trees outside workmen's flats in Kennington. At first, from a distance, it seems as though all the gutters were rushing, the telegraph wires shrilling, then you see the thousands of birds sitting aloft.

As I was walking near Rotten Row in the mist I noticed that the horses had an almost prehistoric look; loping along in shady outline they were more like ghosts of their ancestors.

In the park, Esquimaux babies staring at a pale-blue sky with their pale-blue eyes.

Travelling in a foreign town she always looked first at the shops—"Apricots, you see . . . pineapples are cheap."

The gates blew down during a gale. After that all the dogs of the neighbourhood used to invade the front garden, to sniff round, dig the flowerbeds and leave a little Stonehenge of dung in the middle of the lawn. At first Mr. —— kept a mound of pebbles on the hall window-sill, and whenever there were more than two dogs in sight he would fling open the window, shouting, and hurl a stone. The dogs ceased to pay any attention to him. Then, from a herbalist, he obtained a bottle of some disagreeable mixture which he sprinkled between the gateposts. This attracted dogs who might otherwise have passed by. Now, the dogs do as they please, and Mr. —— pays no more attention to them than they to him.

Snow—the white roof against a dark sky, then the whole landscape like a photographic negative, and each time it surprises and charms, taking us back to childhood.

A touch of piety about the English snowfall: it belongs to Christmas. Say, in December, "It's seasonable," in January, "This will cost us thousands"—"Yes, but think of the employment it gives." When you meet someone get in your "Terrible!" first; with so many white reflections the town is like a big hospital, you are all patients, the weather has become an epidemic.

To a small girl who laughed at a silly remark her father said angrily: "You forget yourself!"

A poet who prayed every night to God, and then to St. Donne, St. Baudelaire and St. Gogh.

A literary dinner-party at which the woman sitting next to you begins, "Tread softly, lest you tread on my dreams."

A gramophone record of everything your neighbour has said during his life.

A ballet in which Marcel Proust would be the only figure on the stage.

Although I so rarely read him, I like to think of Crabbe.

No battlefield visited by sightseers can be more glorious or stricken than the manuscript, cased in glass, of an artist who has struggled with his art.

Listening to the gramophone I fix my eyes on a little landscape painting on the wall. A white-walled town (Spanish?) with pink towers rises in refractive heat over a river, hovering; all round are mountains with firs on their lower slopes; clouds wheel overhead leaving a single patch of blue. How crude it all is (the stones in the river are like porposies), yet during many evenings this landscape has grown to the vision of Haydn, Sibelius, Berlioz, Mozart. I have trodden every inch of its ground; I know it better than any other picture in the world.

G. W. STONIER

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Cataline" at Croydon

To have written this play at twenty-one was something of an achievement, and its production showed it as having more in it than the dried bones of a literary museum piece. It has few traces of the apprentice, learning through love's labour the use of his tools. Ibsen's vision developed early, and along with it went an ability to create forceful drama for its illumination. Wanting already to present the message of his later plays, he makes it implicit in his action, and never by any verbal moralities, too often beloved by earnest young men in the theatre. Already he sees character as conflict between opposing wills in the same man, and Cataline is shown as one whose idealism is for ever blasted by his licentiousness. Whatever the historic mutilation, the character is sturdily built up, carries conviction, and develops throughout the play. Mr. Donald Wolfit was always equal to the part, and often something more, and although on the stage for the bulk of the play, he never grew wearisome. The same could not be said for the women. Mr. Stein Bugge, who presented the play in Oslo, did well with his small stage, and by aiming at a simple, straightforward production, demonstrated the more effectively the play's solid merits. Croydon Repertory Theatre is to be congratulated on its enterprise, and if the play fails to live up to Mr. Bugge's claim that it is "great cosmic tragedy," the fault may well lie in the unfortunate translation. Perhaps nothing fails like poetic drama which lacks all poetry. "Terror fires the soul," confesses Curius. Perhaps; but it is hard to be fired when the language can descend to such pedestrian levels as "Now I will go. An hour's quiet rest will give me strength."

"The Amateur Gentleman" at the London Pavilion

There is nothing positively amiss with this first production by Criterion Films: it is a passable effort, but quite undistinguished. If one wished to be captious, one might point out that the sound and the supers should have been better, and that the direction, which was otherwise quite sensible, was obviously handicapped by an uninspired adaptation of Jeffrey Farnol's novel; it stuck to the scenario with a slavish fidelity which was not really justified by the acting of Mr. Douglas Fairbanks, Jnr., and Miss Elissa Landi. Messrs. Gordon Harker and Esmé Percy did their best to enliven the pace while carrying on with the *contretemps* of the story—and so, come to think of it, did the *jeune premier* himself; but I doubt if twenty people in the audience really *cared* what happened, except that this was one of those films dealing, in fits and starts, with the past injustices of our social system—and one always likes to wait, at all events, until a particular case of flagrant cruelty is scotched, put right, or avenged. In the end it was all hunky-dory; but then the innkeeper *hadn't* stolen the watch. If he had, perhaps he'd have been saved just the same. And anyone else who pocketed a tablespoon would still have been hanged. . . . So we're back where we started—with a dull private drama. The Gaumont-British News obituary of the King was all that it should be: in contrast to the commentary of a Hollywood-made film in memory of Will Rogers, which was inexcusable.

"Jardin Aux Lilas" at the Mercury

Jardin aux Lilas, the new Ballet Club production, has an interesting choreography by Antony Tudor. The setting is vaguely nineteenth century, suggestive alike of 1810 and 1890; the plot, a tenuous affair of lovers changing partners, as in some figure from a quadrille. If at moments the ballet seemed a little

confused, it was probably because the stage was too small; but the effect is poetic and subtly mysterious and moving. The music is Chausson's ravishing *Poème*, a brilliant choice—though we confess we vastly prefer Mme. Rambert's piano to her gramophone. Mr. Hugh Stevenson's costumes are very elegant. Indeed the music and decor at the Ballet Club always show a taste which is both refined and enterprising; the pianist, Mr. Charles Lynch, is an extraordinarily good artist; and the dancers have a freshness which is irresistible. Pearl Argyle, Frederick Ashton, Walter Gore and William Chappell are already popular with large audiences. But here also is an invaluable nursery or conservatory of talent: Maude Lloyd is lovely and promises great things—so do two men, Frank Staff, lyrically leaping in the *Spectre de la Rose*, and Hugh Laing, who brings to *L'Après-midi d'un Faune* an ideal presence and a very exciting tensity. Altogether there is no other theatre in London to which one can go with such certainty of pleasure as to the Ballet Club.

"Siesta" at Sadler's Wells

The new ballet *Siesta* at Sadler's Wells, music by William Walton, choreography by Frederick Ashton, is a very slight affair; the curtain rises on the two dancers, Pearl Argyle and Robert Helpmann, recumbent on the ground, who, after getting upon their feet and making a series of semi-languid and not very expressive movements, return to their original restful position, whereupon the curtain falls. The music, which is an early work by William Walton, has the same lack of grip or atmosphere as the choreography. A much more vital piece was Mr. Walton's "Ballet Fragment" from the film *Escape Me Never*, which was played as an interlude.

Façade, music by William Walton, choreography by Frederick Ashton and setting by John Armstrong, was very welcome after *Siesta*. It is one of the most lively and vivid ballets in the Vic-Wells repertory. It was splendidly conducted by Mr. Constant Lambert, as was *Les Sylphides* earlier in the evening. In fact, it may be said that between them Mr. Ashton and Mr. Lambert have transformed the Vic-Wells Ballet during the past year or two into a first-rate company which will stand comparison with any abroad.

THE COMING WEEK

SATURDAY, February 1st—
- Robert Mayer Concert for Children, Central Hall, Westminster, 11.
- Royal Choral Society, Brahms' Requiem. Albert Hall, 2.30.
- Wells Coates on "Architecture under Dictatorship," 46 Frith Street, 3.

SUNDAY, February 2nd—
- Prof. H. Levy on "Modern European Morality," Conway Hall, 11.
- Pudovkin's "Deserter," Monseigneur Cinema, Piccadilly, 2.15.
- Beecham Sunday Concert, Queen's Hall, 3.15.
- The Pirani Trio, Working Men's College, Crowndale Road, 6.30.
- Dudley Collard on "Aspects of the British Constitution: The Judiciary," Marx House, Clerkenwell Green, 7.30.
- "Glory," Arts Theatre.
- "Battleship Potemkin," Forum Cinema.

MONDAY, February 3rd—
- Mr. E. Sandford Carter on "Housing Estates and Their Social Problems," Housing Centre, 13 Suffolk Street, 6.
- Miss E. Arnot Robertson on "Contemporary Fiction," Institute of Education, Southampton Row, 7.30.
- Public Welcome to Jawaharlal Nehru. Speeches by Sir Stafford Cripps, Aldous Huxley, Prof. H. J. Laski, and others, Caxton Hall, 8.15.
- J. L. Hammond on "World Conciliation and Its Problems: Modifications in the Colonial System," Conway Hall, 8.30.
- "The Black Eye," Croydon Repertory Theatre.
- "So Ended a Great Love," Everyman Cinema, Hampstead.

TUESDAY, February 4th—
- Dr. E. J. Dingwall on "Spiritualism and the Modern World," Conway Hall, 7.
- League of Nations' Union. Lord Allen of Hurtwood and Mrs. Corbett Ashby on "The World Situation," St. Mary's Hall, Hotham Road, Putney, 8.
- "Follow the Sun," Adelphi Theatre.
- "St. Helena," Old Vic.

WEDNESDAY, February 5th—
- "Figaro," Sadler's Wells.
- W. Arnold Forster on "World Airways," Conway Hall, 8.
- Sir Norman Angell on "National Defence and the Collective System," Kensington Town Hall, 8.

THURSDAY, February 6th—
- H. R. G. Greaves on "International Control of Raw Materials," Livingstone Hall, Broadway, Westminster, 8.

Our Net Sales

The net sales of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION *for the six months—July 1st to December 31st, 1935, exclusive of all free copies and after deducting all returns received during this period, averaged*

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Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

THE magnificent acting of Charles Laughton in *The Mutiny on the Bounty*, now in its sixth week at the Empire, has received many tributes; perhaps the greatest is the tremendous interest he has stimulated in the whole subject of the mutiny. Hardly a day goes by without letters or articles on Bligh's character or the fate of the mutineers. A great piece of acting has awakened general interest in England and America and all the specialists who feel competent to add to our knowledge have rushed into print, if only to rebuke the film producer. But Laughton's Bligh, no sadist (I use the word correctly when I use it at all) but a salt-encrusted, wooden disciplinarian, ruthlessly at odds with his officers and men, is absolutely convincing. The more I read of the mutiny, the more I believe in him. There is an immense library on the subject and fresh books on it are appearing rapidly. Nordhoff and Hall's story has been a best-seller in America for several months and I see that *The Saga Of The Bounty; its strange History as related by the participants themselves*, edited by Irvin Anthony (Putnam, 10*s.* 6*d.*), is already in a second impression. The plan is excellent, for Mr. Anthony declares:

> I have given the narratives just as they left the pens of those that lived and sailed. . . . To have altered their words would have been to make them speak out of their parts. . . .

Mr. Anthony may not have altered their words, but others have done so before the narratives from which he quotes were printed, and the book has more serious blemishes. The editor does not include a bibliography. His only comments are superficial paragraphs, heading each of the extracts. The worst feature of the book, however, is that it includes three long passages from *The Letters of Fletcher Christian* which he tells us was published by H. D. Symonds, London, 1796, but which is patently a forgery. Seventy-three pages, or over one fifth of the entire book, is therefore not only worthless but misleading. Mr. Irvin Anthony suggests that Christian altered the names of places so that those of his companions who remained on Pitcairn's island should not be discovered.

> Allowing for this, and similar devices, aiming at the prevention of the discovery of the literal truth by his countrymen, the letters bear every mark of authenticity.

Apart from the fact that the only surviving mutineer, Alexander Smith, *alias* John Adams, said that Christian went mad and committed suicide shortly after their arrival at Pitcairn's island, and that we don't know how he could have got back, the letters are obvious forgeries on account of their contents, and on stylistic grounds. Their writer tells us, with a stay-at-home snigger, that Englishwomen would be mighty popular with the Tahiti men, that the ship's barber had brought the painted bust of a woman "rigged out in all the magnificence of fashion" "among other insignia of his profession," and that this was dressed up to impose on the Tahitian men. Is such an object likely to have been on board? Even more surprising is the declaration:

> it is but justice that I should acquit Captain Bligh, in the most unequivocal manner, of having contributed, in the smallest degree, to the promotion of our conspiracy, by any harsh or ungentlemanlike conduct on his part.

The style adopted is, however, proof enough. What mutineer, who had taken a ship and returned to his savage mistress, would speak of: "our emancipation from the silken fetters of love"? Or would describe

> spreading lawns of never-failing verdure, admirably adapted to the rising slopes of the mountains, produced a most striking effect.

It is plain that a would-be Defoe who hoped to turn the story of the *Bounty* to profit, has taken Christian as his Alexander Selkirk. Born before his time, this first prospector of a rich vein of gold seems to be the most incompetent of those that have quarried in it.

It is a relief to turn from the spurious to the authentic, from the incompetent to the scholarly. Mr. Owen Rutter has many claims to our gratitude; his researches on the Bounty are notable. He has recently published a few passages from Bligh's own log in the *Times*, and is editing the whole of this document which will be published by Methuen's in May. There is a striking difference in style between this and Bligh's account as printed which leads one to suppose that the latter is a milk-and-water version, in which he received help. Mr. Owen Rutter has already published *The Voyage of the Bounty's Launch* (Golden Cockerel Press, £2 2*s.*), that is the account given by Fryer, Master of the Bounty, who had good reason to hate his superior officer, and he has now published and edited *The Journal of James Morrison Boatswain's Mate of the Bounty* (Golden Cockerel Press, £3 3*s.*), which is a document of surpassing and unexpected interest. Morrison, a loyal man, remained on board the *Bounty*, probably because there was no room in the launch. He was well-educated, full of scientific interest, prudent and courageous. And he writes a beautifully clear, straightforward style. I think we may regard him as absolutely reliable and he is the chief hostile witness against Bligh. Morrison tells how Bligh served his crew with a ration in which one pound of pumpkin was rated as equivalent to two pounds of bread, and of how, when they complained, he cried out: "You dam'd infernal scoundrels, I'll make you eat grass or anything you can catch before I have done with you." Morrison's story of the outward voyage is full of such iniquities perpetrated by a grasping martinet who was making a profit by starving his crew. This aspect of Bligh's character is borne out by his treatment of Fryer, as recorded in the *Voyage of the Bounty's Launch*, and, I think, by Bligh's subsequent record in provoking a mutiny in Australia. Yet there is no doubt that "Breadfruit Bligh" was not only an exceptionally fine seaman, but a man with a real devotion to science and a humane interest in the natives of the islands he visited. Both of these qualities, we may assume, he had acquired on his voyage with Captain Cook, whose memory he revered. Morrison had picked up the same humane interests—perhaps from Bligh himself, or more probably from Nelson the botanist of the expedition.

* * *

When Christian went off to Pitcairn's island Morrison kept a few of the steadier men together who repeated the feat of Sir George Summers in the Bermudas, by building a small schooner. The difficulties of such work with only a few saws, adzes and trade hatchets and hardly any nails must have been enormous. But Morrison and his companions were still at Tahiti when Captain Edwards arrived in the *Pandora*, and they were abominably ill-used on the return voyage, both before and after the wreck. Though convicted by the court-martial, Morrison was pardoned and Admiral Sir Thomas Troubridge, under whom he had previously served, afterwards applied for him as his gunner. But Troubridge was the death of him, and everybody else on board, as he persisted in sailing in the rotten *Blenheim*, which fell to pieces in the Indian Ocean. Morrison, however, has left a more permanent record than his account of the mutiny, in the second part of his Journal which is a most detailed and objective description of Tahiti and of the manners and customs of its inhabitants. His sober, careful words give the most convincing account of the happy, lovely people and the rare moments when he allows his emotions to appear, are moving. After he was put in irons on the *Pandora*:

> During the time we staid, the Woemen with whom we had cohabited on the Island Came frequently under the Stern (bringing their Children of which there were 6 born, Four Girls and two Boys, and several of the Woemen big with Child) Cutting their Heads till the Blood discolloured the water about them, their Female friends acting their part also and making bitter lamentations,—but when they came to be known they were always driven away by the Captains orders and none of them suffered to come near the Ship.

It seems possible that the Mutiny occurred as a result of Fletcher Christian having a fit of persecution mania—for which there was no doubt ample justification. But at the moment of the mutiny he seems to have struck several witnesses as almost insane.

DAVID GARNETT

THE PRESS

The Press. By A. J. CUMMINGS. Twentieth Century Library. *Lane.* 3s. 6d.

How can a prominent daily journalist write candidly about Fleet Street and remain in Fleet Street? Partly because of this difficulty, and partly because of the complexity and variety of practice in each newspaper office, it is true, as Mr. Cummings says, that "a really first-class book on the press has yet to be written." There are technical books on journalism and books of advice to journalists. Authorities like Mr. Blumenfeld have said interesting things about the press; books like Tom Clark's *Northcliffe Diary* and Kennedy Jones's *Fleet Street and Downing Street* (written after the author had retired to Westminster) are full of incidental revelations. A foreigner like Kurt von Stutterheim can make a thoroughly useful survey of the press, and Sir Norman Angell dig into his long experience of journalism and discuss in an illuminating way the psychology of the newspaper reader. But no one has yet even attempted the task of dealing authoritatively with the kind of material which forms the daily gossip of Fleet Street. No full examination has yet been made of the operation of the law of libel. How far does it prevent the publication of things that should be published and how far is it a necessary safeguard against gross intrusions into private life? Again, the public would like to know what has happened to-day in the modern big circulation press to the relations between the proprietor, the business manager, and the Fleet Street editor. Nor have we any detailed account of the influence of the advertiser on the newspaper, or estimate of the number of columns which to-day look like *bona fide* news when they are really in one form or another disguised advertisement. None of these things has been done, and, as Mr. Cummings implies, they badly need doing. His own useful and interesting little volume scarcely touches upon any of them. On one or two of these points where I have myself ventured generalisations (though always with the warning that they did not apply to more than a section of the press) I am gratified to find that Mr. Cummings does not substantially disagree with me. He merely points out that the exceptions which I had referred to are important and thinks that I go too far. But it was not I, but Mr. Kennedy Jones (who was associated with Lord Northcliffe in the transformation of the press at the end of the last century) who said that journalism was not a profession but a branch of commerce. What I most miss from his book is any discussion of "news value." Mr. Cummings rightly points out that politics are often important news, and political journalists perhaps more rather than less in demand to-day; but he misses the point of interest when he says nothing of the factors that make politics news, nothing of how far they are news in themselves, and on what occasions they only become news for the masses when they are aided by the introduction of "human interest" and by a process of dramatisation which may easily be misleading.

The main object of Mr. Cummings's book is to plead the superiority of an uncontrolled capitalist press to any press which is subservient to the State. No such book would have been written before the triumph of Hitler in Germany. It had become customary to say that the freedom of the press was no longer a question of freedom from State interference, but of freedom from control of big business. Mr. Cummings knows something about the evils of capitalist control, but he is far more concerned with the immediate danger, which he sees in England as well as in other countries, of the press being transformed into a mere instrument of Government propaganda. In order to make his point he gives an admirable sketch of the position of the press in Germany and Russia. The details in the case of Germany are too little known and his account will be of value to a large number of readers. About the Russian press he writes exceptionally well, exposing the error that the Soviet press consists only of two government papers, reminding us of the wall newspapers in factories and of the very considerable measure of freedom of expression and of vigorous criticism by various groups within the Soviet system. He sees that the fight for an uncensored press is still to be fought in Russia, and says that if the press were free it would "kill the Ogpu stone dead." He gives a striking account of his own visit to Russia during the Moscow trial (comparing it with his experience during the Reichstag Fire trial) and says that "as a Radical and a democrat I am not altogether unhopeful of the future of the Soviet press." Already the censors

> find that it pays to be reasonable and tolerant. The more, acting of course upon instructions, they allow news and comment to be sent out freely from Russia, the more likely the Soviets are to experiment with the novel idea of uncensored news and unfettered comment in their own newspapers. I myself have been amused more than once at the astonishment revealed on the faces of the Soviet press censors when they have read in my despatches from Moscow sharp criticisms of the policy of the British Government of the day *vis-à-vis* Russia.

In short, under Communism freedom of the press may in time be won. Under Fascism there can never be free criticism because, however long it lasts, its economic system cannot stand examination, nor can its structure exist except by force and propaganda. Even to-day he points out that the Communist press is vastly superior to the German press, not only because it gives more and more accurate information, but also because the journalists, though restricted in what they are allowed to say, are encouraged to talk sense and not made to write what they know to be rubbish.

While I agree heartily with Mr. Cummings that a democratic press is preferable, even in the conditions of capitalist democracy to-day, to a press which serves only as propagandist instrument of the State, I think his enthusiasm for his thesis has led him sometimes to exaggerate the freedom and minimise the defects of the press in democratic countries. About the American press I find Mr. Cummings particularly interesting, though rather too flattering. About the French press he is, I think, less well informed and in some cases misinformed. He describes as independent one or two Paris newspapers which are notoriously open to almost any substantial bribe. Here, as throughout his discussion of the democratic press, he seems not fully to appreciate the issue raised by the effective control of most of the press by capitalist interests. But he is, of course, right in regarding this control as infinitely less hateful than a State control such as is exercised in Germany. After inveighing against efforts to increase the power of the State over the press here—he has some justly severe things to say about the Sedition Bill—he concludes:

> If there is one cause for which I would be prepared to die it is that of helping to preserve my native land from the shame and misery of a Fascist dictatorship towards which the first decisive step would be the State control of "that endless book," the Press.

Admirably said. I would only add that if we are going to keep liberty we must increase it, not only defend it.

KINGSLEY MARTIN

A GREAT HUMANIST

Essays in Honour of Gilbert Murray. By VARIOUS HANDS. *Allen and Unwin.* 12s. 6d.

Greek Poetry and Life. Essays Presented to GILBERT MURRAY. *Oxford University Press.* 21s.

These volumes record the fact that on January 2nd last Professor Gilbert Murray celebrated his seventieth birthday. The first contains a series of essays almost as wide in their subject-matter as the interests of the eminent scholar to whom they are dedicated. Mr. H. A. L. Fisher writes some pleasant reminiscences in the mellow style of an Oxford common room. Lord Cecil and Señor de Madariaga celebrate Professor Murray's devotion to the League. Mr. Masefield and Dame Sybil Thorndike tell us something of what he has meant to the great fellowship of the theatre, amateur and professional. Mr. and Mrs. Hammond contribute two characteristic essays. Professors Thomson and Toynbee show us how the interpretation of the Greek tradition links us up to new insights into our own world. The whole volume has the distinction and the humanism of Professor Murray himself. The Oxford volume is meant for a more select audience. It is composed of a series of highly technical essays by eminent experts who write as scholars for one of the greatest of their company. The ordinary reader can hardly hope to dwell in so rarefied an atmosphere. But he can at least salute with pleasure the recognition these essays imply.

Neither volume means that Professor Murray has grown old, even if he retires from his professorship this year: they mean only that, at the psalmist's allotted span, it is fitting that friends should testify to the affectionate respect in which they hold him. But the company of those who join in this noble gesture is not limited to Professor Murray's personal friends. Who is there of my own generation who does not owe to him, as to no other living person, the sense of the majesty of the Greek element in our civilisation? Who is there, for something over forty years, who has not known that where tolerance was to be invoked, where compassion was needed, Gilbert Murray would be found in the van of those who offered them? He has been not merely a great scholar; he has made of scholarship a path to a noble chivalry.

He has been one of the two or three great knight-errants of his time among those who seek to make the academic tradition a beacon in our civilisation.

I should like to think that there is something quite specially British in the type Professor Murray embodies. He is not only a scholar in the sense of high learning; he is a scholar in that special sense which makes learning wisdom by finding the way from his particular discipline to the structure of the universe. He has always known the obligation of learning to life; so that he has refused to dwell in an ivory tower and has never been less a citizen than a scholar. I venture, indeed, the guess that it is from his special vocation as a student of Greek literature that he has, above all, learned the true meaning of citizenship; for it was surely from that unendingly creative achievement that he came to understand the obligation of any man who would lead a full life to play his part in, to form his views upon—the life of the commonwealth to which he belongs. It has been of the essence of Gilbert Murray that he was rarely narrow in his insights, that his humanism has been almost as broad as the problems he has encountered. It has been of his essence, also, that he has always been generous, always free, always open-minded. A society that acclaims the worth of Gilbert Murray has some title to consider itself civilised.

His insights have not often been mine. Sometimes I have thought he should have advanced where he retreated, that there are aspects of life to which he has shut his eyes. Sometimes, also, I have looked to him for a little more of that noble indignation of which his friends Henry Nevinson and the Hammonds have been capable. I have ventured, even, to detect in him, upon occasion, not least in his work for the League of Nations, something of that gentle casuistry which Mr. Shaw has indicated in a famous portrait. Some of his personal enthusiasms have seemed to me evidence less of an anxiety to know the truth than of a generous zest for the simplicity of sincerity. There have been one or two conflicts, in which he has been protagonist, where, to the outsider, he seems almost to have courted defeat through excessive gentleness towards his friends.

But he has added, as few scholars of our time have added, to the moral stature of our generation. It is not merely that some of his writings—not least the noble essay on the stoic philosophy—have become a part of our intellectual heritage. It is not merely, either, that in so much of what he has written or said he has given us new and lovely insights into beauties of which we were not before aware. The thing he has meant in all these years is, above all, integrity; and that great characteristic has been born in him of the Greek quality of Aidos about which he has himself written so wisely—the impulse, flowing from an inner and inescapable compulsion never to do or to think those things which cause others grief or hurt or pain. His friends are wherever men still care for tolerance and generosity and compassion. HAROLD J. LASKI

THE ROAD TO ADYAR

"Is This Theosophy . . .?" By ERNEST EGERTON WOOD. *Rider*. 16*s*.

"Is This Theosophy?" No, it is an autobiography, and a very good one, well deserving a more suitable and attractive name. The publishers commend it to our notice as "revealing the secrets" of the Theosophical Society, but after all the best part is the first, which describes Mr. Wood's childhood and youth in Manchester. He left school at thirteen, made two or three unsuccessful excursions into "business," as a warehouse apprentice, set up for himself next on a capital of £7 (five of which were borrowed), by the age of sixteen was employing sixteen clerks, and at twenty-five sold out and invested the proceeds, realising a small competence. (His trade was in postage stamps.) Meanwhile he had become obsessed by the idea of perfection, and had seized upon Mrs. Besant as his spiritual guide. In obedience to her advice he had "educated himself," not merely by voracious reading, but by four years' study at the Technical College—choosing scientific subjects "in order to avoid a bias," as philosophy and metaphysics were "child's play" to him. It will be seen that he was terribly thoroughgoing; even now he appeals frequently to "logic," and as a young man he went headlong for its extremes. On retiring from business he joined Mrs. Besant in India, and devoted himself gratis to theosophical work.

Somehow, from that moment, the story gradually peters out. I do not mean that it ceases to interest; but the climax which should follow such a beginning does not come, and in the end

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we find ourselves reading mere travel notes. Perhaps that is because Mr. Wood's narrative so faithfully reflects the course of life. There is no doubt that he appears to have in an unusual degree the gift of truthfulness, of statement accurate and unadorned. Take, at random, a very small example—his childish reaction to fairy-tales. "Grimm's I liked . . . but I could not bear Andersen's habit of making leather and broomsticks talk. And I wanted to know, if a princess was shut up in a tower, what arrangements were made for her sanitary convenience."

The nature of his early experience is perhaps reflected in his type of spirituality. He has clearly never possessed, and indeed despises, the religious consciousness—the sense of inevitable dependence on some power beyond oneself. From the first he was, even in his experiments with the occult, extremely positive, and he has come to believe more and more exclusively in spiritual self-help; there must be nothing external, no ritual, no appeal to God or to a "Master." This attitude would sufficiently explain his break with the other theosophists, who almost all wanted a religion, whereas he wanted an ethical system, backed by science and philosophy.

Would, if an explanation were necessary: but on the contrary, the puzzle is why this sincere, acute, uncompromising "seeker" gave so much time to them, and above all, why he gave so much time to Mr. Leadbeater? He noticed, he says with pain, the disingenuous silence of Leadbeater and even of Mrs. Besant when powers were ascribed to them which they did not possess; he saw through the antics of his fellow-members, for whom clairvoyance had become a kind of parlour game; he did not believe in Leadbeater's prodigious gifts, though he believes that Leadbeater believed in them. Yet, despite his scientific mind and zeal for perfection in this life, he spent years in the older man's, I had almost said shady, company, and in activities which he could not whole-heartedly approve. How, to go no farther, could he stand the atmosphere?

Perhaps because he was kept so busy, learning, teaching, and abundantly expressing himself both on platforms and in print. (The worst enemy of the higher life is busyness.) Perhaps because of a very strong affection for Mr. Leadbeater. This he felt, apparently. Surprise then transfers itself to the way he writes of his old associate—in a manner not openly hostile, but absolutely deadly. Deplorable little facts are intermingled with quiet gibes at Leadbeater's "occult beauty parlour"—for the prettification of "auras"—or at his minute and extraordinarily successful investigation of past "lives." For instance, "There was one intriguing life in which he and I and about half a dozen others were declared to have lived in far Eskimoland and apparently spent most of our time eating blubber! That was regarded as rather a lapse!"

Still, no doubt much affection in the past is compatible with at least equal causticity in the present, and it is in Mr. Wood's rare gleams of humour that he most nearly approaches charm. On the whole, he lacks that advantage—if I may use the word, *positively* lacks it; there is something faintly repellent about his aura, or at least I thought so. However, though attractiveness is very desirable, there are other qualities.

Let me mention one particularly nice, intelligent printer's error —"casual" for "causal." It is wonderful how little the mistake stands out.

K. JOHN

Underground Non-Stop

When a couple of hundred miners are blown to smithereens by fire-damp there is a tidal-wave of public sympathy which brings letters to the press and possibly a bishop to the pithead. But it is questionable whether there would not be a precisely similar wave of public sympathy if Shirley Temple caught the mumps. This is no frivolous comparison. While there are sufficient crocodile tears in middle-class Britain to drown the miners (and Shirley Temple too), there is not sufficient common honesty to ensure the miners a living wage.

Stay-down Miner, by Montagu Slater, is an unanswerable challenge to this sorry-there's-nothing-to-be-done-about-it attitude. It is primarily a report of the stay-in strike at Nine Mile Point; but its simplicity, emotional restraint, and above all its photographic style should stir the most sluggish imagination and move the most callous conscience. Take Slater's picture of the pithead scene, too long to quote here, finishing: "The sense of crisis — of a crisis unfamiliar, vague and quite impossible to describe—is spreading from the Nine Mile Point pithead like the circles round a pebble in a pond. It is more impressive in the dark, and more disturbing."

How easy it would have been to lapse from drama into sentiment in writing that passage. And how easy it would have been to caricature the sketch of Mr. Gregory, founder of the black-leg Industrial Union, and thus defeat the powerful anti-Gregory propaganda which Slater achieves. *Stay-down Miner* has the essential virtue of being not only first-rate propaganda, but first-rate entertainment as well. While it is palatable enough to be swallowed by the average middle-class reader it is bitter enough to check complacency. In fact to read this book is very nearly as good, or as bad, as a visit to South Wales.

Stay-down Miner is the first of a series of books in *le grand reportage* tradition. They will set out to paint vivid but unvarnished pictures of various working-class events and conditions. Number Two of the series (on Birmingham) is under way. But in the meantime read *Stay-down Miner*, and then you will know just what "reportage" means. Ask your bookseller: *Stay-down Miner*, Montagu Slater, 2s. 6d. net.

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NEW NOVELS

A Daughter of Satan. ANONYMOUS. *Newnes.* 7s. 6d.
Forgive Adam. By MICHAEL FOSTER. *Constable.* 7s. 6d.
Joy Court. By F. LAYLAND-BARRATT. *Chatto.* 7s. 6d.
Death Sentence. By ALICE DUER MILLER. *Philip Allan.* 7s. 6d.
Invitation to Life. By ERIC KNIGHT. *Cassell.* 7s. 6d.
Blessed Above Women. By PAMELA JOHNSON. *Chapman and Hall.* 7s. 6d.
The Sleeping Woman. By JOAN CONQUEST. *Jarrolds.* 7s. 6d.

Here are seven novels chosen for their capacity to provide light entertainment. *A Daughter of Satan*, *Forgive Adam*, and *Death Sentence* all deserve a star as being genuinely readable, and all are more or less easy on the eye. They are stories with murders in them; too psychological to be called thrillers, too straightforward to be detective stories; we need a name for them. *A Daughter of Satan* reads like a potboiler produced by clever young people in an advertising agency, they write down to us a bit too much and have a very fluctuating estimate of the reader's intelligence, but it is an enjoyable thriller, a book to read in the train (it takes about an hour and a half) and then forget. You will adore Sadie.

> Early in the afternoon Sadie and her mother were walking along one of the shopping streets of Westcaster. Sadie hated to be seen with such a shabby old creature. . . .
>
> "I hope so, mother," Sadie murmured. "I know I've sometimes been unkind to you, but I couldn't help it. Once I cried myself to sleep because I thought how hurt you'd be at something I'd said to you!" Her mother patted her hand. "Don't think about it any more darling. The past is dead and buried, and we're all going to be happy now."
>
> Sadie looked at her shyly, her lovely black eyes lowered as if in self-reproach. She was thinking: "By this time to-morrow you will be dead!"
>
> This frail, stupid old woman would slip so easily out of the world. . .

Forgive Adam belongs to the familiar Yewgottabe Tough school, of which there has been rather a dearth lately. Part is written in italics, and that part is like Hemingway, and part in ordinary print, and that is like Dashiel Hammett. The italics are about the hero's childhood and early married life, the rest about reporters and crime in San Francisco. It is a vulgar, sentimental, sexy book, but exciting and readable. It doesn't compare with the Postman and his friends, but it's a good deal better than nothing. It always surprises me that English reporters are such a silent lot, one knows inside out by now the life of American ones—what they eat, where they drink, who's who in the homicide squad—but here they can't point to a short story between them. Perhaps, on second thoughts, I have been unfair to *Forgive Adam*. The hero loses his wife, then his adoring son, then his mistress, and one can't help feeling genuinely sorry for him—but not quite as sorry as one is meant to—but it's an efficient, disturbing and brutal book.

The best thing about *Joy Court* is the cover and the binding, which are fascinating. It is the story of a capable Suffolk farmer's daughter who marries a three-quarter wit and has two idiot daughters. She makes a life for herself by building some cottages round a court-yard and letting them. The book is about her family and her tenants. It is an interesting document, quiet,

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The author of "This Side Idolatry" has written a charming novel on the attractive yet tragic figure of William Makepeace Thackeray.

(Thursday) 7/6

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plausible and restrained, ending on a plea for morals and eugenics. The good novel that is really there, the novel on the cover, is the life story of the idiot daughters, seen from within; and the few scenes which they play are brilliant, but the authoress has chosen instead to paint a picture of a group—tenant by tenant—and missed her opportunity. The book is a little flat and the chapter-head quotations are irritating, but it is an untouched-up picture of rural vice written by a lover of rural virtue.

Death Sentence is a smooth, worldly, psychological murder story. It contains a brilliant picture of a young and egotistical millionaire, and others, not so brilliant, of a rather wooden explorer and his wooden daughter—"Speaking of astronomy—the last donation I gave to my own college—very trifling, a few thousand dollars—was used to improve the celestial camera"—says the rich young man. So he gets what's coming to him.

Invitation to Life has another reporter and another murder trial. Lion Feuchtwanger has said of this novel that it is "a very successful mixture of objectivity on the one side and of romanticism on the other." It is better as a mixture than as a novel, and is on the whole a crude, tedious, and sentimental book, though short and tersely written. It has one brilliant flash—the phonetic reproduction of children repeating prayers—and a gruesome description of the third degree.

Blessed Above Women is the story of a Welsh school teacher, a spinster who has been in an asylum at one time, and who runs a boarding-house in Bloomsbury. She falls in love with one of her ex-pupils, whom we see first as a child, then as a young man come to join the boarders. One is inclined to recognise him as the most disconcerting of the younger poets. The novel portrays the mad, oversexed spinster, who would be a monster in the usual book, as a sympathetic and unhappy lady, and the younger set in the boarding house are well done, but *Blessed Above Women* does not do much more than mark time in the literary development of its accomplished young author. The tragedy of being a young novelist is that you have too many years in which to write novels. Forty is a good age to begin. Twenty means that you write fifteen books by the time you're forty and then it is too late. And, with the slightest of apologies to those who think material is not important to a novelist, one must add that, however honestly observed, beer and bedsitting rooms, and even the most outrageous coffee-parties, are not enough.

The Sleeping Woman is in a different brew. Miss Johnson is an intelligent young writer with a sense of words and a respect for discipline—Miss Joan Conquest (whose book is dedicated to *Darlingmost*) works from way down in the endocrine.

> "Fools!" A hand against each breast she pushed them further and further apart. "Fools"! "Who are you, either of you, to say what is to become of me, Thaxalaixtlahuaca, the Indian?" She frowned, a copper-gold figure in her lingerie briefs between the two stripped men.

It is a stirring, powerful tale of men and artists in Mexico—and Indians:

> Stripped to the loin-cloth, mask-like faces turned towards the flaming sunrise, fathomless, inscrutable, black eyes looking straight into it, clasped hands knocking bent knee, they sounded the Tribal Call, softly, very softly, louder, louder still until it seemed to fill, to ring right through the Valley of Mexico.
>
> *Knock-knock-knock.*
> Listen!
> *Beware the Panoaya Indian.*
> Listen!
> *Glop-glop.*
> *Glop-glop! Glop-glop-glop!*
>
> . . . .
>
> *Glop-glop!*
> *Glop-glop, glop-glop-glop!*

Those were the Panoaya Indians.

CYRIL CONNOLLY

THE FUTURE OF SAIL

Uffa Fox's Second Book. *Peter Davies.* 35s.
A Yachtsman's Log. By FRANK G. G. CARR. *Lovat Dickson.* 7s. 6d.

Mr. Uffa Fox is a most elusive creature.

In his first book he threw out a hint that the art of yacht building had advanced so far since the day the building of large sailing ships ceased, that it might be possible now to build sailing vessels big enough to be as fast as the fastest liners. Potential speed, of course, is proportional to the length of a ship's hull: and it looked as if there might be something in the idea: a spectacular one indeed, with its vision of the ocean recaptured for sailing vessels of vast size and a speed of thirty knots! In reviewing his book for THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION, therefore, I challenged him to work out the details of such a vessel.

Just before *Uffa Fox's Second Book* came on the market its author wrote to me that he had taken up the challenge: that he had designed a sailing vessel, about five hundred feet in length, capable of 33 knots—in short, capable, under favourable conditions, of beating the *Normandie* across the Atlantic. She was to be a huge three-masted wishbone ketch; yet her largest fair-weather sail would only contain 76,000 square feet (little more than twice the size of the *Endeavour's* spinnaker); and a crew of eighty, he said, could handle her. It may be imagined, therefore, with what impatience I turned to the Epilogue, wherein she is described.

Well, there were her lines: there was her sail-plan, and the plan of her accommodation. So far so good. But here is my grouse against Mr. Fox. Instead of a sober, earnest account of *how* he proposed to build her—something solid, downright, and fanatical—he cast the whole thing in the form of a dream, a vision, a journey to heaven; and built her not of wood, not of steel, but of a miraculous alloy as yet unknown to I.C.I.! Nothing could be more exasperating. Describe the ordinary in fantastic terms if you have a bent that way: but anything so extraordinary as the building of the *Aurora* wants the coldest and soberest telling.

Either the thing is feasible, or it is not; and Mr. Fox, if anybody, must know whether it is feasible or not. I wish he had not hedged in this way.

I suppose the sad truth of the matter is that even Mr. Fox, faced with scantlings and specifications, funked the task he had set himself. It was the masts, I suspect, that he boggled at. For it is a notorious fact that mast-design, for all its recent improvements, to-day lags far behind hull-design; and anyone might well jib at building and rigging, out of known materials, a mast 350 feet high that would not sink the ship!

Could such a mast be built? That is too technical a question for me, but I would diffidently suggest a certain line of approach. A hollow, tubular mast of the usual pattern would need to be large enough to contain a passenger-lift (a great convenience

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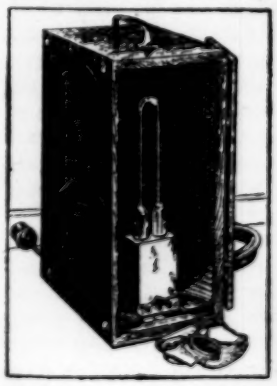

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when going aloft!) if it was to stand the enormous compression. But might it not be possible to dispense with the lower mast altogether? To substitute, for the usual flexible shrouds and ratlines, latticed steel girders in the form of a pair of huge sheer-legs: in short, to return to the "wishbone" mast of the Ancient Egyptians: and to step the topmast on their apex?

But it is hardly fair to give so much space to grousing about a short Epilogue—even as a variant to the chorus of praise with which this book has been rightly received. For the body of the book is certainly a worthy successor to its brilliant predecessor. It is a critical compendium, for the main part, of the most recent achievements in design and seamanship: finely illustrated, and argued with that clarity, authority, and wit one would expect from Mr. Fox.

Mr. Carr's *Log* is smaller game, but it is good of its kind. Mr. Carr is an experienced and a modest seaman. The yachtsman, he suggests, like the lawyer, cannot learn by pure theory: he needs his "leading cases" too. And it is these Mr. Carr sets out to supply, from his own life. There are many folk whose generosity prompts them to publish the glorious story of their successes, that all may profit thereby. But there are few whose generosity equals Mr. Carr's: for there are few who will willingly publish their mistakes also for others to learn by—as Mr. Carr, with rare moral courage, has done in this readable book.

RICHARD HUGHES

A WELCOME PROTOTYPE

The Iconography of the First Duke of Wellington. By LORD GERALD WELLESLEY and JOHN STEEGMAN. *Dent.* 18*s.*

Mr. Philip Guedalla in his introduction to this valuable book stresses its importance for students of Wellington. Quite as significant is the light it focuses on the psychology of nearly half a century of English painting. Wellington was the most painted man of his or any other day. He himself once exclaimed that he had sat four hundred thousand times and Lord Gerald Wellesley has succeeded in collating over two hundred portraits. They reach all in all a singularly low level of achievement. The Duke's heavy featured, immobile mask was not an easy subject, had it belonged to a mere man. But Wellington was more, he was a hero, and the heroic was of all manners that which the painter of the early nineteenth century could least well tackle. For the authors of two attempts, Wilkie and Haydon, words were a more flexible medium than paint. Wilkie, as a pendant to two stately, murky canvases, leaves an intensely vital picture of the old Duke personally counting out the twelve hundred guineas for *The Waterloo Gazette* in bank notes, while Haydon, who thought his sitter looked like an eagle, illustrated his description with a predatory profile. Gahagan turned Wellington into an emaciated Roman consul, Lawrence felt compelled to make one of his rare efforts at an equestrian portrait, and even Phillips, with his peculiar talent for mollifying the sublime to the absurd, had to pretend to rise to the occasion. To demand objective accuracy under such conditions would be prosaic. Until the last decade or so of his life Wellington's portraits do not in any real way synchronise with literary accounts of his appearance. Goya, with a temperamental distaste for the ideal, offered instead two nervous, half-comprehended sketches, but where, among the portraits of 1820 or 1821, do we find the man who a year before had looked so wrinkled that Maria Edgeworth "did not know what Duke he was"? Round 1830, when he was entering his sixties, Lawrence had to admit that he looked gaunt and middle-aged. But it was not till ten years later that Marochetti could put out a timid suggestion that the corners of the great Duke's mouth had sunk, and that Leslie could be content to paint what Leigh Hunt saw, an old man "walking by a lady's side with no unbecoming oblivion of his time of life." The later portraits are adequate in a sense in which the earlier are not; Hayter even as a young man thoroughly understood senility.

The moral, I suppose, is not that we would do it better, but that we would not do it like that at all. Were Laszlo asked to paint a dozen official portraits of some modern general, I doubt if they would reach as high a standard as Lawrence's; were Salisbury commissioned to do *Haig meditating over Passchendaele*, I doubt if he would make as good a shot as Haydon. The difficulty in the majority of cases was due less to blank incapacity than to the character of popular requirements. Faced with a more intimate subject, Scott for instance, much the same set of painters achieved work of infinitely higher documentary and aesthetic value. It says all the more for Lord Gerald Wellesley and Mr. Steegman that in spite of their material they have produced an extremely attractive useful book. They have established a precedent which might be followed with no less advantage in very many other cases. Theirs certainly is the method any future iconographer must employ.

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MORE RECOLLECTIONS

Recollections of a Picture-Dealer. By AMBROISE VOLLARD. *Constable.* 18*s.*

One cannot but wonder why this book was published first in English: in fact, one wonders why it was translated at all, since it seems unlikely that anyone who cares to read it will be unable to read it in French. Be that as it may, M. Vollard has done his reputation as an author no good by this curious manœuvre. Not that the translation is bad; on the contrary, it is rather well done. It does not read like a translation, but it does not read like Vollard either; and that is a misfortune, for M. Vollard has a personal and engaging style. Indeed, it was his style which gave flavour to those two highly entertaining books, *Cézanne* and *Renoir*. Without Vollard's style Vollard's anecdotes fall flat.

To be frank, these recollections are about as small beer as the recollections of one who has rubbed shoulders with the great of two generations can be. Assuredly the chronicler has known a great many remarkable and amusing people, but what he tells us about them in this book is rarely amusing and hardly ever remarkable; while what he tells us about himself seems, as often as not, improbable. The volume teems with heavily sarcastic stories of collectors who refused to pay a few hundred francs for pictures which have since been sold for hundreds of thousands. If a stockbroker were to favour us with a list of shares which once went for an old song and subsequently soared to astronomic heights, his book would be as interesting as many pages of this. What is more, this incessant harping on figures may well lead uninitiated readers to suppose that the author, like the amateurs he mocks, judges pictures by their prices.

Of course he does not. Vollard cares genuinely; and it is notorious that he bought boldly from the best artists of his age

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when their work was quite unfashionable. What is less well known, because he has said less about it, is that he has stocked quantities of rubbish too. However, for evidence of his good taste and judgment one need look no further than the cover of his book. In the centre is a photograph of the author, and grouped round the photograph are five portraits: they are by Cézanne, Renoir, Bonnard, Picasso and Rouault. Surely no one, not Federigo da Montefeltro himself, can have been painted by so many first-rate artists?

The most interesting thing in the book is the account of Manet in Venice. This, however, is not by Vollard, but was communicated by M. Toché. Vollard, himself, is seen to most advantage in the later chapters, especially when he tells the story of his publishing activities. Here is information lively and new; and one gets the impression that, in his heart, the author cares more about producing these lovely editions, on which he probably loses money, than about the picture-dealing which has brought him a fortune.

From a story told on page 231 it is to be inferred that M. Vollard is under the impression that Debussy was a writer.

SIR SAMUEL ROMILLY

Sir Samuel Romilly 1757-1818. By C. G. OAKES. *Allen and Unwin.* 18*s.*

A biography of Sir Samuel Romilly has long been needed, and Mr. Oakes has done his best to pick up the widely scattered threads of his life. Romilly was a Huguenot by origin and displayed all the tenacity and acumen that is usually associated with that type. Business anxieties of his father, who was a jeweller in London, combined with his mother's bad health were largely responsible for the nervous weakness which resulted in his committing suicide soon after his wife's death in 1818.

Romilly's career was unusual in the sense that he achieved considerable success in his profession as a lawyer while at the same time conducting an unsuccessful crusade in the cause of law reform. As Solicitor-General in 1806, and soon after in Opposition, he fought hard for the abrogation of the death penalty, which was then applicable to over two hundred offences, including thefts of only five shillings. This barbarous law did not even spare children, and they were often condemned to death as a matter of routine.

It is curious that after many years of agitation inside Parliament and without he succeeded in abolishing only four capital offences out of the two hundred, but his activity, which found expression in pamphlets as well as in speeches, fructified after his death both in the matter of capital punishment and in the matter of naval and military flogging. His professional work involved him in the litigation about Queen Caroline and in the affairs of Lord and Lady Byron. It is interesting to learn that Byron's grudge against Romilly, rather indecorously expressed in ribald verse about his suicide, arose mainly from the fact that his solicitor had retained Romilly and that Romilly's clerk had forgotten the retainer when Lady Byron's solicitor subsequently arrived.

On the same page on which this verse is transcribed Mr. Oakes records that Lushington, who lived to the age of ninety-two, made a statement in which he confirmed the fact that the cause of the separation was not incest but "brutally indecent conduct and language of Byron" towards his wife. Romilly's reforming activities brought him in contact with many men who were hostile to the law as it stood, and did not move in legal circles such as Bentham and Dumont. He was equally happy in his marriage and his friendships, and this no doubt did much to compensate him for the disappointments of his public life, particularly as he was perhaps too serious in temperament to find relief in humour, or even satire.

Romilly's reforming activities included Catholic emancipation and legislation to prevent an heir to land escaping the responsibility of a testator's debts. He also objected to the power of the ecclesiastical courts and sympathised with his friend Bentham's anxiety to reform the marriage laws at a time when divorce could only be obtained at a prohibitive expense from the House of Lords. It was a curious career for a highly successful member of the Chancery Bar, and the principal tragedy of it was that he never saw the result of his exertions. He died in 1818 at the age of sixty-one; but if he had attained the age of seventy-five he would have seen his mission accomplished. As Mr. Oakes writes: "In 1820, the Speeches were published. In the same year the Bill to abolish the death penalty for 'privately stealing in shops' passed both Houses although, by amendment in the House of Lords, it was limited to goods of the value of ten shillings. Two other Bills became law. In 1823 judges were given the power to record and not pass sentences of death except on convictions for murder. Between that year and 1831 consolidating Acts were put on the Statute Book and benefit of clergy abolished. In 1832 the first Reform Parliament was elected and, shortly after, there were swept away the barbarous survivals of a brutal age." The last sentence is certainly too sweeping, for even now there are barbarous survivals with no Romilly to protest.

E. S. P. HAYNES

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It is a great pity that this book was not better written. Apart from charming little turns of style—"a plot of ground big enough for two cats to dance on"—it is diffuse, repetitive and only gets going half way through. The subject could hardly be more fascinating. It is the history of the inventor of the revolver, and the first "rugged individualist," perhaps, of America. A man whose bank balance rose with the death-rate (he, like Sir Herbert Lawrence, had no "honourable but perhaps mistaken ideals respecting the sanctity of life and the iniquity of war"), he was, at the same time, the first employer of his country to build for his workmen a housing estate with a social centre for music and debate, install washing facilities in the factory, institute a 10-hour day, abolish piecework in favour of the minimum scale, and establish trust funds for superannuated workers—all this years before the American Civil War. The characters of such men are almost hypnotising in their contradictions. In them, one hears echoes of the Renaissance prince, and prophecies of Hitler, mixed with the earliest pipings of the Fabians. Monday, at "Armsmear," in Connecticut, would see some fresh amelioration of the employees' conditions, Tuesday would see him off, armorial bearings on the panels of his carriage, to Washington, where the Government needed revolvers for their cavalry in order to fight

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MISCELLANEOUS

ISLES OF GREECE, CRETE, ASIA MINOR. April Cruise from 22 guineas, London return. Opportunity for teachers and students. Apply Box 1000, N.S. & N., 10 Gt. Turnstile, London, W.C.1.

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the Sioux, Cheyennes and Arapahoes, who had lately become a danger because Col. Colt had previously sold them muskets.

With the natural instinct of his kind—and his kind are going to ruin the present President if they can—he hated politicians. For one thing, they had disbelieved in him and his inventions, and retarded his success until he was a comparatively old man. In England, for instance, Lord John Russell had dismissed the revolver as "ingenious," though Lord Palmerston had been characteristically intrigued. The people who helped him, and set him on the road to wealth, were such men as Kossuth and Garibaldi, the Texan Rangers, the Cuban rebels, the Red Indians and the Fenians. The Governments came trailing in after the outlaws, and, while his millions accumulated, the Colonel merrily armed one against the other, from Vienna to California. Teetotum that he was, he nevertheless foresaw, and denounced, the Civil War. "Not all the slaves in the South," he wrote, "can be regarded as worth the life of a single Northern mechanic." But his case, of course, and the case of those like him, is given away in his choice of words. He wrote "mechanic," and not "man," because it was waste, and not death, that disturbed him. In connection with this, there is a very interesting passage in the book concerning one of his most extraordinary actions.

He became interested in the selling of willow furniture, and in order to produce it as expeditiously as possible, he caused an entire community of people, from near Potsdam, to be transported to the neighbourhood of his factory, on the banks of the Connecticut river. Awaiting them, was a complete reproduction of their native village. In trying to dissuade him from this venture, his German agent wrote to say that he felt certain Col. Colt could make little "use for such a happy-go-lucky group in his efficient organisation." The reason that the agent gave was this:

> "The willow workers knew nothing of the high-pressure manufacturing methods which Sam Colt was pioneering. They understood nothing of the wage system as developed in the United States. They worked on a somewhat communal basis, taking great pride in their craftsmanship, well content if their efforts provided food sufficient for their needs, and shelter under which the family could gather when the day's labor was done. Work and profit were not the objectives of their lives. These were merely incidental to the business of living; they were necessary daytime diversions so that the nights of music and song, leavened with steins of beer and snacks of food, could be better enjoyed."

Colt, of course, could not understand any of this, and took no notice of it. He went on with his "pioneering." He was the man who admired Brigham Young, and misprized Lincoln. But it is precisely because such men cannot understand what might be called the willow working point of view, that they are the most dangerous men in the world. It is less that they think lightly of life, than that they misunderstand its purposes. Colt misunderstood, and so, later, did Teddy Roosevelt, with all his wretched fiddlededee about Americanism. Ford misunderstands to-day—a man who, incidentally, inherited the assembly line, and interchangeable parts, from Colt. The European dictators misunderstand. All "rugged individualists" always do.

BRIAN HOWARD

SHORTER NOTICES

Peter Lecky. By HIMSELF. *Cape.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

Mr. Lecky has written the autobiography of a rolling stone. He is a highly accomplished writer (and also, it seems, a skilful draughtsman), and at the end of his book one is left uncertain why he has chosen to earn his living as a cowboy, a warder, and an opener of pearls. For these occupations are not nearly so romantic as the films might suggest, and Mr. Lecky writes of his experiences sardonically rather than with gusto. The descriptions of life on Canadian and Australian ranches are vivid, and the account of his war experiences is a model of brevity. He is sensible, sensitive, thoughtful and apparently candid, but in his account of himself something, we feel, has been omitted, and our enjoyment of the book is qualified by this slight bewilderment. Mr. Lecky suffers not only from restlessness, but from asthma, and his fellow-sufferers will be interested to hear how successfully he palliates the attacks by giving himself injections of adrenalin. It is also interesting to notice the extreme coldness with which he writes of his public school, Dover. Are the vast majority of old public-school boys thus unappreciative of the privileges they have enjoyed, or is it only men with literary ability who are thus ungrateful?

The Second Oldest Profession: A Study of the Prostitute's "Business Manager." By BEN L. REITMAN. *Constable.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

Dr. Harry Roberts in his preface writes of this book with rather greater respect than it appears to deserve. Dr. Reitman has been friendly with a number of pimps, and writes of them without either cant or sentimentality. But there is a certain naiveté in his ostentatious freedom from prejudice; the statistics he produces are not always convincing; and the case-histories are not very enlightening. The book, however, is readable, and helps to explain why so many prostitutes choose to give some man a large part of their earnings. The importance of the pimp is not so much that he is a discoverer of clients or a protector, as that he is a lover or friend to whom the prostitute, frequently cut off from her family, can give the affection she needs to feel. It is indeed doubtful whether the extreme brutality of the English law to pimps does not deprive prostitutes of one of their necessary consolations. Prostitution is one of the most unhealthy trades, and the man who levies a toll on the money earned at it is an unattractive figure. But whether he is more unattractive than many employers remains a matter of taste. The pimp at least has to make himself agreeable to his girls: Mr. Mellon is under no such necessity with the men who work in his copper-mines.

The Last Plague of Egypt. By BARON HARRY D'ERLANGER. *Lovat Dickson.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

There's a lot of cant talked about drugs by Europeans and Americans, who do not realise the value of opium in countries where there are very few doctors, dentists, or bottles of aspirin. But six years ago drug-addiction in Egypt had become alarmingly widespread: there was evidence that about one man in four had contracted the habit; and though hashish may be no more damaging than alcohol, a country in which a quarter of the population were drunkards would be a place of unnecessary misery. Baron Harry d'Erlanger has written an account of the successful abolition of the drug habit in Egypt by the stoppage of supplies. The hero of his book is an Englishman, the head of the Cairo police, Russell Pasha. With the help of the League of Nations, the activities of which in this matter he made very effective, he tapped all the sources from which drugs could be procured. And though no doubt the neurotic rich in Egypt, as elsewhere, can still procure narcotics with which to poison themselves, the ordinary decent people are now immune from this temptation. The devotee of personal liberty may very logically stand up for every man's right to make himself miserable in the way he wishes to. But the habit-forming powers of heroin and cocaine quickly deprive addicts of the liberty to abstain from these drugs. If educated persons choose to use them it is their own funeral, but to give the fellaheen access to narcotics of whose effects they are ignorant is as indefensible as to put revolvers or explosives in the hands of small children. The reader of the book is left with great admiration for the character and intelligence of Russell Pasha. Baron Harry d'Erlanger uses an elaborate Augustan style, often felicitously, but irony, like heroin, is a pleasure which can become an addiction, and in his case it is almost a vice. The book, however, is eminently readable.

The Horse: Its Action and Anatomy. By LOWES D. LUARD. *Faber and Faber.* 15*s.*

Mr. Luard is unequalled among living painters in the representation of animals, especially *percherons* or French cart-horses. He is also, what is far more important, an artist: that is to say, his work is distinguished by the vital or rhythmical qualities of design without which fidelity to appearances is aesthetically insignificant. In consequence his scientific study of the action and anatomy of the horse includes a number of very just comments emphasising the fact that accuracy for the artist is the means rather than the end. The tendency among almost all the best contemporary painters is to be more consciously interested in design than in representation, but many of the greatest masters have been intensely preoccupied with the notation of appearances, and the sketches of modern artists show that this interest is still stronger than their paintings might suggest. Mr. Luard's book most admirably explains the horse as a machine made for movement, and the functions of the various muscles and bones which constitute this machine are most lucidly described. There are excellent anatomical drawings, in which different colours make clear the various muscles, and Mr. Luard's drawings are exemplary of the power to suggest movement and stress. This book can be warmly recommended as of great interest, even to the painter of abstracts, the surrealist, and the hunting man.

Dramas of the Law. By HORACE WYNDHAM. *Hutchinson.* 18*s.*

There is a vogue in the publication of books in which old and forgotten trials are retold, and in this class of literature the present book has much to commend it. Mr. Wyndham is mainly concerned with slanderers and swindlers, male and female, the only murder charge he deals with being that of the mysterious Hambrough case, in which the verdict was "not proven." The most dramatic case cited is that brought by the wife of Sir Francis Twiss against Alexander Chaffers for gross libels, which Chaffers sought to justify in a merciless cross-examination of the lady, who at last broke down, and before the defence had begun withdrew from the case. For the rest we have the exposure of Horne, the Medium, the quarrel between Buchanan and "the Fleshly School," culminating in the action Buchanan *v.* Taylor; the adventures in law of Miss Mabel Wilberforce who, losing her libel action against Captain Francis Philp, was indicted for perjury; the action against Duncan of the *Matrimonial News*; and the exposure of

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LECTURES AND MEETINGS

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

A Lecture on "THE INVENTION OF THE SCIENCE OF LAW AT ROME" will be given by Prof. Dr. Jur. FRITZ SCHULZ (Professor of Law in the University of Berlin) at University College, London (Gower Street, W.C.1), on Thursday, February 6th, at 5.30 p.m.

Admission free, without ticket.

S. J. WORSLEY,
Academic Registrar.

SCHOOL OF ORIENTAL STUDIES (University of London), Finsbury Circus, E.C.2 (Liverpool Street, Broad Street and Moorgate Stations).

A Course of Six Lectures on "THE TECHNIQUE OF CHINESE PAINTINGS AND CALLIGRAPHY" (illustrated by practical demonstrations and lantern slides), will be delivered by CHIANG YEE (Assistant Lecturer in Chinese at the School of Oriental Studies), on Wednesdays each week at 5.30 p.m., beginning on 12th February, 1936.

Syllabus.

1. General Survey of Calligraphy and Painting.
2. Calligraphy: technique and style.
3. Painting: technique.
4. Painting: development of technique, composition, etc.
5. Styles and painters.
6. Styles and painters (continued).

Admission to course of six lectures: £1 1s.

Tickets may be obtained on application to the SECRETARY, School of Oriental Studies, Finsbury Circus, E.C.2.

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February 20th—Lecture-Recital on "Elizabethan Music." By HAROLD CRAXTON.
March 5th—"17th and 18th Century Music" (with musical illustrations). By PROFESSOR W. G. WHITTAKER, M.A., D.Mus.
March 12th—"British Music of To-Day" (with musical illustrations). By ARTHUR BLISS, B.A., Mus.Bac.

INAUGURAL LECTURES.

February 25th—"English Studies." By PROFESSOR F. P. WILSON, M.A., D.Litt.
March 17th—"Tibullus." By PROFESSOR R. B. ONIANS, M.A., Ph.D.

Admission free by ticket on application to the Secretary stating date and sending stamped addressed envelope.

February 12th—Lecture on "Some recent tendencies in American fiction, with special reference to Willa Cather and Ellen Glasgow." By EDWIN MIMS (Carnegie Visiting Professor to the British Universities). Admission free without ticket.

HAMPSTEAD ETHICAL SOCIETY, 153 Finchley Road (Swiss Cottage), N.W.3. Sunday, Feb. 2nd at 6.15, ALEC CRAIG (Author of "Sex and Revolution"): "THE 'SEXUAL IMPULSE' PROSECUTION."

CONWAY HALL, Red Lion Square, Holborn.—Sunday, February 2nd, at 11 a.m.: PROF. H. LEVY, D.Sc.: "MODERN EUROPEAN MORALITY." 6.30 p.m., Concert Chamber Music. Admission Free. Visitors Welcome.

GUILDHOUSE, Eccleston Square, S.W.1. Sunday, Feb. 2nd at 4, Tea Table Conference: "SWITZERLAND. At 6.30, DR. MAUDE ROYDEN: "THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS."

THE ETHICAL CHURCH, Queen's Road, Bayswater, W.2. Sunday, February 2nd at 11, The Rev. V. A. CALLOW: "AUTHORITY IN RELIGION." 6.30. The Rev. V. A. CALLOW: "THE MORAL CHALLENGE OF BEAUTY."

THE SEXOLOGICAL GROUP will hold a Meeting at TRANSPORT HALL, Smith Square, Westminster, on Tuesday, February 4th, 1936, at 8 p.m., when DORA RUSSELL will speak on "MODERN SEXUAL AND PARENTAL MORALITY." Chairman: Mr. Norman Haire, Ch.M., M.B.

Members of the Group will be admitted free. To other persons a charge of one shilling will be made for admission. Tickets may be obtained at the Hall.

SIR NORMAN ANGELL will speak on "NATIONAL DEFENCE AND THE COLLECTIVE SYSTEM," at Kensington Town Hall, W.8. on Wednesday, February 5th, at 8 p.m. Admission free. Limited number reserved seats. SEC., League of Nations Union (Kensington), 85 Abingdon Villas, W.8.

F.P.S.I. Public Lecture by W. ARNOLD FORSTER on "WORLD AIRWAYS." Chairman, Frank Hardie, at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, on Wednesday, February 5th, at 8 p.m. Tickets: Members 6d., non-members 1s.; from SECRETARY, Federation of Progressive Societies, 475 Oxford Street, W.1. (May. 3110) or at door.

DR. E. J. DINGWALL will speak on
"SPIRITUALISM AND THE MODERN WORLD."
at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, Holborn,
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THE BEDFORD TRAINING COLLEGE FOR TEACHERS, 14 The Crescent, Bedford. Recognised by the Board of Education. Principal: Miss MARGARET SPENCE. Students are prepared for the examination of the National Froebel Union. The course of training is for 3 years. Fees with residence £94 10s. to £100 16s. Fees without residence £31 10s.—For particulars apply SECRETARY.

THE BEDFORD PHYSICAL TRAINING COLLEGE, 37 Lansdowne Road, Bedford. Principal, Miss STANSFELD. Students are trained in this College to become teachers of gymnastics. The course of Training extends over 3 years and includes Educational and Medical Gymnastics, Massage, Dancing, Hockey, Lacrosse, Cricket, Tennis, Netball, etc. Fees £165 per annum. For prospectus apply SECRETARY.

the arch-swindler, Joseph Hollis Yates, with the staggering sentence of "penal servitude for the term of his natural life."

Before the War: Studies in Diplomacy. By G. P. GOOCH. **Vol. I—The Grouping of the Powers.** *Longmans.* 10s.

No one knows more about the diplomats and diplomacy of the pre-war period than Dr. Gooch. In this book he deals with five diplomatists, Lansdowne, Delcassé, Bülow, Iswolsky and Aerenthal, giving a chapter to each. He studies their personalities, but primarily their policies. The serious student of pre-war history will find the book valuable, for it gives an admirable account of what each of the five statesmen contributed by his policy to the international structure which collapsed in 1914. Dr. Gooch is not only learned; his historical judgment is unusually sound and he is singularly free of political bias. One always feels that one is getting the nearest possible thing to an objective analysis. The obverse to these merits is a certain flatness of style and presentation.

Week-end Competitions

No. 307

Set by Ralph Partridge

We offer a First Prize of Two Guineas and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea for a simple prose fable (in not more than 250 words), using Aesop as a model, which would be applicable to the enforcement of oil sanctions in the Italo-Abyssinian war. The fable ought to aim at a universal appeal, and therefore must have alternative endings to please both the Negus and Mussolini.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, February 7th.

2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.

3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 305

Set by Sylvia Lynd

We offer a First Prize of Two Guineas and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea for a poem of not more than thirty-two lines, written during an Air Raid, the first few verses ending with the words:

> We certainly exaggerate
> The Sanctity of Human Life,

and the last verse, during which it may be imagined that the bombs fall nearer, ending slightly differently.

Report by Sylvia Lynd

The entries on this occasion have nearly all been amusing and to the point. Here, for instance, are quotations from four different competitors, Messrs. A. and G. MacBean, L. V. Upward and Rowley, whose verses are more amusing in one another's company than in their original contexts.

Be calm, my friend—a little port?—
Remember England is at war.
This sort of thing is after all
Just incidental, nothing more.
Though some poor souls may chance to lose
A brother, sister, friend, or wife,
We certainly exaggerate
The Sanctity of Human Life.

And, after all, how sweet a death
To die for what one holds most dear;
To utter, with expiring breath,
A faint but patriotic cheer!
When Peace is our degraded state,
And talk of "No More War" is rife,
We certainly exaggerate
The Sanctity of Human Life.

Meanwhile, I trust, the splendid men
Who serve our anti-aircraft guns,
Will quickly find the range, and then
Show these vile swine that Britain's sons
Fear not to slay the foe they hate
When alien devilry is rife;
We certainly exaggerate
The Sanctity of Human Life.

And I am reluctant not to give Bow-wow's final verse a little publicity.

The Joneses have a bomb-proof shelter:
Let's hurry to it helter-skelter—
Nay, dally not, my dearest wife!—
For there, with an undamaged pate,
More calmly can I underrate
The Sanctity of Human Life.

Messrs. Archibald Robertson and R. D. C. again, make a better Ballade between them, I think, than they made separately.

BALLADE OF DISTORTED VALUES

The dogs of war are on the scent,
The foe is panting at the gate,
Air-raiders have been seen in Kent
And though you've come to terms with Fate
Among the inconsiderate
There's still a mild reluctance rife;
We certainly exaggerate
The Sanctity of Human Life.

Why pine at our predicament?
The Rights of Man are out of date,
And citizens are only meant
To serve that sovereign God, the State.
And then, mere rational debate
Is dull compared with lethal strife:
We certainly exaggerate
The Sanctity of Human Life.

The fighting instinct must have vent;
Besides, Big Business cannot wait:
Munition shares pay ten per cent.—
A very modest estimate.
The soldier's safe in armour-plate:
Why not blow up the soldier's wife?
We certainly exaggerate
The Sanctity of Human Life.

Envoi

Prince, I regret you couldn't wait:
You cut for shelter like a knife;
Alas! You, too, exaggerate
The Sanctity of Human Life. R. D. C.

The first and second prizes I award to R. E. Latham and Harry Broadbent respectively, who seem to me to have sustained their themes with great success.

FIRST PRIZE

THE BOMB COMES HOME

When we preserve unwanted strays
Or stay the ruthless sword of law,
Or bid Belisha's beacons blaze,
Forgetting Nature's tooth and claw,
When from the pulpit's top we prate
Or patient ply the surgeon's knife,
We certainly exaggerate
The Sanctity of Human Life.

Bombs from these thriving works that grew
Have proved the childish gospel vain
In Tokio and Timbuctoo
And Paris Plage and Port of Spain,
Made Bethlehem's throbbing skies vibrate
A hymn with richer promise rife:
"We certainly exaggerate
The Sanctity of Human Life."

How stirring, now the tide has turned,
To watch our handiwork in action,
Remembering every building burned
Means work for the surviving fraction.
There falls a 1938!
I wonder if it got my wife.
(We certainly exaggerate
The Sanctity of Human Life.)

There goes another, not so far—
In fact uncomfortably near.
But trade agreements sacred are,
They know they can't do that there here.
Smash this bright hive of industry
To scrap iron? What could be absurder?
We all must feel the sanctity
Of scientif—God help us! Murder!! R. E. L.

SECOND PRIZE

LINES WRITTEN DURING AN AIR RAID

See, there they come, the bombing-planes,
Deep-droning messengers of death;
And even now from each there rains
Red slaughter on the earth beneath:
So let men die, for bloody fate
And glorious fame are man and wife;
We certainly exaggerate
The Sanctity of Human Life.

At Ilium and Pharsalus
Men hacked and slew and nobly died,
But deadlier weapons make for us
More glorious the crimson tide:

Company Meeting

MIDLAND BANK LIMITED

Mr. McKENNA'S ADDRESS

THE Ordinary General meeting of shareholders of the Midland Bank Limited was held in London on Tuesday, January 28th, 1936, and, in view of the national mourning, was adjourned until Wednesday, January 29th.

The Chairman, the Right Hon. R. McKenna, before delivering his address, referred to the death of His Majesty the King, and the meeting rose and stood in silence.

Continuing, the Chairman said that they could look back this year on a century of banking history. The growth of their Bank was too long a story for that meeting, but it would be told fully in a book which is shortly to be published, and which describes the development of the banking system to meet the rapid growth of industry.

PROGRESS IN MONETARY CONTROL

After dealing at length with some of the difficulties and defects of earlier banking, with the growth of credit during the life of their own bank, and with the changing instruments of credit—bills of exchange, cheques and bank overdrafts—Mr. McKenna continued: The rise of bank deposits to a position of dominance in the supply of money is not merely of the highest importance judged by quantity and convenience. Under our centralised system bank deposits have become the subject of deliberate and unified control; and this fact has made it possible to use them as the active instrument of monetary policy. A system has been evolved for regulating approximately the supply of money in accordance with trade requirements. When more or less money is needed the amount outstanding can be varied through the market operations of the central bank. Currency has become a secondary consideration. It is true that expanding trade, based upon a growth of credit, increases the retail spending power of the public and consequently entails an enlarged demand for currency; and were the conditions of the Bank Charter Act still operative the central bank might find itself unable to meet the demand. Additional currency, however, can now be furnished by the authorities, if they choose to exercise their powers, without reference to the central bank's holding of gold. Thus the nineteenth century, which brought into general use a means of payment hitherto scarcely known outside London, brought also the machinery whereby it could be subjected to intelligent control. With the development of the great consolidated banks, of which our own is an example, and with the steadily growing authority and power of the Bank of England, the framework for a comprehensive system of sound money has come into being. The system is comprehensive in the sense that each part of the money supply—coin, notes and bank credit—is made subject to a single control. The ultimate control rests with the Government of the day, acting upon principles publicly declared or defined by Parliament in statute.

Happily, in respect of principles as well as practice much progress is to be recorded, no small part of it being the fruit of hard experience. In the seventeen years from 1914 to 1931 our money was subject to violent fluctuations in purchasing power. We suffered the evils first of inflation and then of deflation. We learnt that a shortage of money may be just as vicious in its effects as an excess, though deflation has still a touch of virtue about it in the minds of many people. Nevertheless, it is becoming more and more widely recognised that greater productivity calls for an increased supply of money, for otherwise prices will fall, business will stagnate, and the growing productive capacity will be unused. The joint declaration at the Imperial Conference at Ottawa in 1932, the declaration at the London Conference in the succeeding year, and various statements by the Chancellor of the Exchequer have all laid down the basic principle that for money to be truly "sound" there must be enough of it to finance an ordinarily growing volume of trade, yet not so much as to give rise to an inflationary movement of prices. The major tests of sufficiency are to be found in comparative stability of the price level and the extent of unused productive capacity, of which the number of unemployed may afford some indication; a corrective test lies in the balance of all international payments and receipts other than transactions in gold and on capital account. Nowadays the authorities have most of the statistical and other data on which to form a judgment on monetary needs, and in our own country at any rate the banking machinery for giving effect to their decisions is fully developed. How well their task has been accomplished in the last four years is shown by the steady recovery of trade and industry throughout the sterling area in a world which is still economically disorganised and depressed.

THE FUTURE OF MONETARY PRACTICE

Although we can thus record an important change in monetary ideas, our progress along this line has been slower than in banking technique. The old conflict of opinion has by no means ceased, and perhaps never will. There is a natural tendency, when a particular course is recognised as bad, to jump to the conclusion that the opposite is good, whereas the truth may be that both are bad and that a middle line is the right one. In past centuries so much suffering had been entailed by repeated currency debasement that mankind, in recoiling from that evil, was blind to the opposite evil of undue restriction. There is, moreover, the extreme difficulty of detached reasoning on the subject of money. The earning or ownership of money on whatever scale is such an important factor in our everyday lives that we find it difficult to discuss money in the abstract. But theories on the total supply of money have nothing whatever to do with its distribution among classes or individuals. More than one exponent of monetary management has been misled into the belief that he has discovered a simple method whereby every individual can be made better off without working. Monetary management can do no more than remove obstacles in the way of industry and assist its expansion. It can help to extend the area of employment and bring production and consumption into better relationship; but, notwithstanding many dogmatic assurances to the contrary, it cannot of itself create wealth available for distribution.

We could dismiss these ideas as of no practical importance if it were not for the danger that for self-protection we might be driven back once again to the safeguard of rigid restriction. In the world crisis we learnt how vulnerable our former monetary system was rendered by this very quality of rigidity. The effective operation of the system depended upon the free use of gold as the basis of credit and currency; the system could not survive when gold was hoarded on a vast scale. The misuse of gold has driven us to abandon fixity of the external value of our currency for the far more important benefit of stable internal value. Whereas since 1931 the pound sterling has depreciated by forty per cent. in terms of gold currencies, its purchasing power in the hands of the consumer has been practically unchanged. We have long had a managed currency in the sense that the gold on which it was based was managed; we have to-day a managed currency in the sense that the control is operated through management of the volume of credit.

As to the future, I think it would be a grave mistake to regard gold as an outworn instrument in monetary affairs. On the contrary, I believe it will continue to perform a valuable service, though of a kind somewhat different from its service in the past. In some important countries the psychology and habits of the people and the defects of their internal monetary systems preclude the possibility of operating a pure managed currency. For this reason, together with the general acceptability of gold in settlement of international payments, it is likely to continue for an indefinite future to play an important part in the monetary systems of the world. One might indeed foresee a system under which gold could be managed by the principal trading countries in such a way as to maintain not only its value in terms of national currencies, but also its value in relation to commodities. The use of gold in settlement of international payments is a sound reason for making its management the subject of international co-operation.

The long striving after safe and efficient money raises the question whether the problem is yet finally solved for all time. I do not think so. For one thing, the indices which must serve as guides to monetary management by credit control are complicated, and perhaps not all of them are yet apprehended by even the acutest economist. Again, new conditions both national and international will arise which will call for further adaptation and development of our monetary system. The old problem of metallic money debasement by clipping was solved well over two hundred years ago by a Frenchman's ingenious device of the milled edge; the succeeding century was occupied with the task of regulating paper money; the progress of the last hundred years has developed a nation-wide machine, centrally operated, for regulating a still newer form of money—bank deposits. We cannot tell what the future may bring, but our immediate task is to use this machine in such a way as to assist the steady upward trend in the standard of living which the immense advance in productivity has happily brought within our grasp.

THE PAST YEAR

Before turning to the report and balance sheet for the past year, the Chairman said that during the past few months their board had suffered severely by death. The passing of Lord Jellicoe was not merely their loss but the nation's loss. The untimely death of Sir John Beale at the height of his career removed from their board a man distinguished by administrative ability, and, again, in Mr. William Bennett, they had lost the co-operation of a man of exceptional gifts. In addition, Mr. E. W. Woolley, a former managing director, had been compelled to retire through ill-health.

The board had been strengthened by the appointment of Col. Mason

(*Continued on page 169*)

Such deeds then let us contemplate
In war relentless, to the knife ;
We certainly exaggerate
The Sanctity of Human Life.

The shrapnel cracks, the bullets sing :
In clouds the poison gases spread
With bland caress enveloping
The slowly dying and the dead ;
Though fools and pacifists may prate
Of " blind and barbarising strife,"
We certainly exaggerate
The Sanctity of Human Life.

But nearer now the bombs resound ;
With smoke and flame they fill the skies :
Hard by, deep underneath the ground,
An air-raid shelter snugly lies,
And come, I can no longer wait
The glory and the blood to see :
I cannot overestimate
The value of my life to me.

HARRY BROADBENT

CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

PROBLEM 162.—CRICKET

Alan, Bernard, Cyril and David were all at the seaside together. Each, moreover, was accompanied by his mother and sister.

" Listen," said Alan (who had a passion for organising things), " To-morrow we'll have a series of cricket matches. There can be two matches before lunch ; two in the afternoon ; and two more after tea. Thus, before lunch it might be my team against Bernard's, and Cyril's against David's, and so on. We can decide that by drawing lots."

" How do we make up the teams, though ? " asked Cyril. " Some of the women are so much better than others."

" Aha," said Alan, " that's where organisation comes in. None of us will play with his own mother or sister, 'cos families don't get on too well together, but he'll have in his team, for each of his three matches, the mother of one of the other chaps and the sister of a second. A different mother and sister each time. I've worked it out, and it can just be done."

" It's a swell idea," said David.

For the first match, in the morning, Alan's team included Bernard's mother. In the afternoon Alan's sister played in Bernard's team. After tea Alan's team played Cyril's and Bernard's sister made a century.

Name the personnel of David's team in each of his three matches.

PROBLEM 160.—SNOOKER AT LITTLE SNAGSBY

This problem I regard as rather difficult. At any rate, it appears to have defeated a number of our better mathematicians.

Let Potham's chance of winning any one game be p. Then his chance of losing is $1 - p$.

His chance of winning m games (exactly) out of a total of n games is :

$$\frac{n!}{m!(n-m)!} \cdot p^m (1-p)^{n-m}$$

Hence :

$$\frac{7!}{4!3!} \cdot p^4 (1-p)^3 = 2 \cdot \frac{7!}{5!2!} \cdot p^5 (1-p)^2$$

whence $5(1-p) = 6p$

i.e. $p = \frac{5}{11}$

The rest is obvious. Potham's chance of winning all seven games is p^7

i.e. $\frac{5^7}{11^7}$

which gives odds of approximately 248 *to* 1 *against.*

PROBLEM 159.—MR. TRIMMER

A set of Low's cartoons goes to " Furthermore Stack," 21 North Harley Mews, W.1.

Seven points are awarded.

PROBLEM 153.—WRONG NUMBER

Six points are awarded.

PRIZES FOR PROBLEM SOLVERS

A set of Low's cartoons is awarded to the sender of a correct solution selected at random.

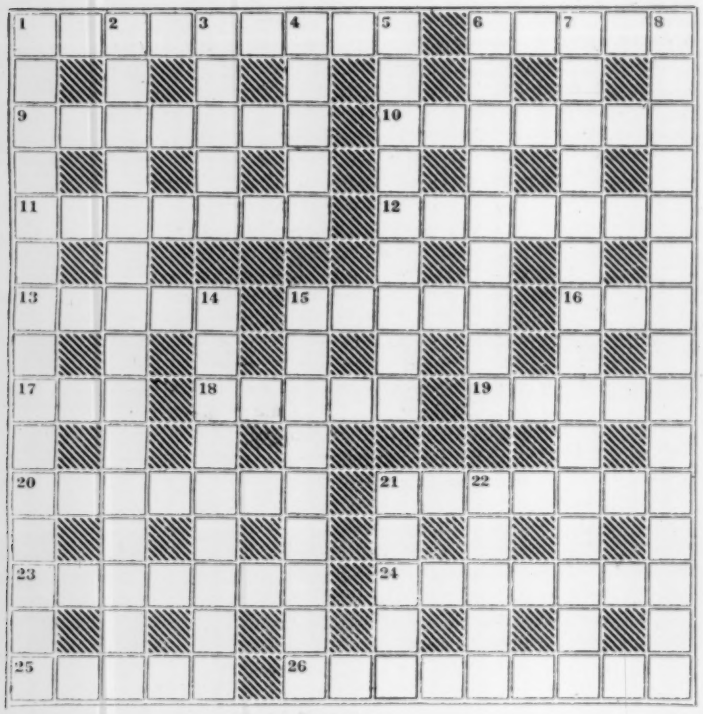
In addition, a record is kept of correct solutions sent, and of the points scored weekly by solvers. On attaining 100 points a solver is entitled to a prize consisting of any book (or books) reviewed or advertised in these columns, of a value not greater than 10*s*. Solvers who have won a prize on this basis are eligible for a second prize on attaining a further 120 points, and for a third prize on attaining a further 150. Solutions must be addressed to CALIBAN, c/o the Editor, and must reach this office not later than Tuesday week following publication of the problem. Solutions to two problems may be sent in one envelope ; but on separate sheets of paper.

Some indication should be given of the method of solution.

CALIBAN

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 308

The sender of the first correct solution to be opened may choose as prize a copy of either *This England* or *The Playtime Omnibus*. Envelopes should be addressed to " CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1, and must arrive not later than first post next Wednesday. Prize-winners should address their claims to the Editor.



Set by L.-S.

The last week's winner is
P. R. Williamson, 86 Copgrove Road, Leeds, 8.

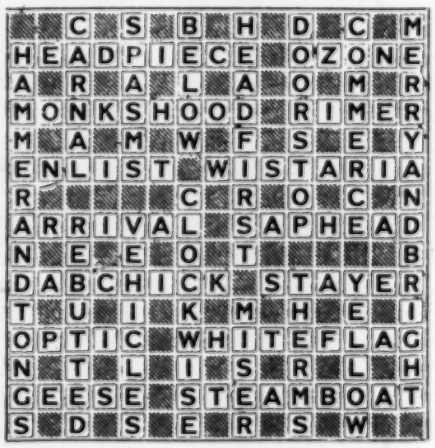
ACROSS

1. Suggests average time.
6. Blackstone's residence at Mecca.
9. Penultimate view of the Cheshire cat on board ship.
10. Top dressing.
11. They are presumably always at home to their friends.
12. One can only do it if one has forgotten.
13. The oysters' end.
15. Portion of Shakespeare Bacon definitely wrote.
16. Last on the mountain where the Ark landed.
17. " Authoritative " result of chewing the cud it seems.
18. Fruity order to a male to make himself scarce.
19. Bouncing boors.
20. This sort of coloured man may be white.
21. How one drank when there were no heel-taps.
23. Caning with these should not be a bitter punishment.
24. Mercury's metallic combination.
25. It's Love's turn to find the answer.
26. Lay livings so to speak.

DOWN

1. War-time body that suggests the heart of the maxim.
2. Robot companion to Nym.
3. The ear of a bird.
4. River to try for trade.
5. One repast in common language.
6. Do they get the hump at their job ?
7. This is intended to bring people back to earth again.
8. Depression of the War Office when the supply of shells gets low ?
14. Selfish designation of 1.
15. Talked in a contrary manner presumably.
21. What members of the Society of Friends do ?
22. The lava was diverted round me to some purpose.

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD



MIDLAND BANK LIMITED

(*Continued from page 167*)

and Sir Francis Joseph, both already distinguished in business and public affairs.

Passing to the business results for the year, you will have observed that the recovery in profits from the low point of 1932 has continued. The reasons are essentially unchanged : a higher general level of deposits, mainly on current account terms ; and general business recovery, which has again reduced the demands of provision for bad and doubtful debts, and has brought back into the active interest-earning class a number of debit accounts upon which it had been thought prudent to reserve the interest charges.

Adding together the net profit for the year, £2,353,000, and the amount brought forward, a total of £3,225,000 is available for disposal. The interim and final dividends, both at the unchanged rate of sixteen per cent. per annum less income tax, together require £1,767,000, while a somewhat higher allocation to reduction of bank premises account and a slightly lower apportionment to reserve for future contingencies together absorb £550,000. If this were the end of my story, a sum of roughly £900,000, marking some further increase on the year, would be left to go forward into the profit and loss account for 1936.

In considering these figures, however, the board had in mind that 1936 was to be no ordinary year. They felt that, funds permitting, some recognition might be properly accorded to a happy event, the centenary of the date of our opening for business, August 22nd, 1836. In the balance of profit and loss account we have a sum built up from the small amounts left over out of profits year by year after ensuring the stability of the bank and distributing dividends to the shareholders. What more appropriate than that this fund, the accumulation in a hundred years of small surpluses on profit and loss account, should be called upon to provide the means for marking the conclusion of a hundred years of successful work. We propose to pay to the shareholders out of this fund a centenary bonus of two per cent. less income tax, a distribution which will call for £220,000. Let me remind you, however, as a precautionary measure, that centenaries do not occur every year, and that this bonus is not to be regarded as anything more than it is, a single payment which, in that light, the board are glad to recommend.

The board also felt that there were others who should be remembered on this auspicious occasion. The distribution to the shareholders would have been impossible but for the faithful and efficient services of our staff. At each annual meeting during my chairmanship I have tried to express our appreciation of their services ; to-day my words have a more concrete form. We have given to each member of the staff, of whatever category or grade, as well as to pensioners and the widowed beneficiaries of our Mutual Provident and Widows' Fund, a centenary bonus of five per cent. of their salaries or allowances, with a minimum of £10 and a maximum of £100 This distribution which is subject to income tax, absorbs £210,000. Finally, we have not forgotten the children of deceased bank officials, and £20,000 has been given to the Bank Clerks' Orphanage, the governing body of which will be free to use the income from the fund in any way it considers desirable. Altogether these distributions, the announcement of which has been received with gratification on all sides, amount to £440,000, and the balance of profit and loss account is carried forward in the sum of £467,000.

The balance sheet again bears witness to the expansive monetary policy pursued in this country since 1932, for deposits have increased by £23 millions over the year, bringing the total to the highest ever recorded. The fluctuations during the year were less marked than in 1934, and a sustained upward trend was noticeable. The increase was concentrated upon current accounts, indicating a higher general level of activity in accordance with the livelier trade conditions throughout the country. The turnover on current accounts in our bank was again five per cent. larger than in the previous year. In our own experience, then, we see evidence not only of ruling monetary policy, but also of the beneficial effects upon the nation's business. Everyone knows that the recovery has been mainly in the home market, but even in external trade some revival can be seen.

Turning to the assets side of the balance sheet, the cash position is exceptionally strong. Over the entire year our cash ratio, in common with that of the other banks, has been lower than in 1934, thus becoming adjusted to a more ordinary level.

Short money is unchanged ; investments are about £7 millions lower in consequence of the repayment of " shorts " ; and the total bill holding has risen by £5 millions.

It is encouraging to be able to record a rise of over £13 millions in advances, traceable mainly to special loans to local authorities and partly to the greater activity in the building industry. Let me explain that our accommodation to this industry is confined to short-term loans to builders, contractors and others ; we are in no sense engaged in the long-term financing of house-purchase, for which ample funds are available from other sources. The number of our advances at the date of the latest detailed analysis was slightly higher on the year at more than 180,000, giving an average advance of less than £1,000.

The report was adopted, other ordinary business was transacted, and the proceedings ended with a vote of thanks to the Chairman.

Company Meeting

F. W. WOOLWORTH & CO., LTD.

MR. W. L. STEPHENSON'S ADDRESS

The Twenty-seventh Annual General Meeting of F. W. Woolworth and Co., Ltd., was held on Friday, 24th January, in London.

Mr. W. L. Stephenson (Chairman and Managing Director), presiding, asked all present to stand for a few moments in silent tribute to His Late Majesty the King.

The Chairman first dealt with various items in the balance sheet saying freehold and leasehold properties showed an increase of £628,994 which with the current write-off of £137,649 showed that £766,643 was spent on properties during the year. On Stocks there was a normal increase of £29,946. Cash at Bank at £6,607,971 was as usual very high at the close of the year. Continuing he said :

SUBSTANTIAL ADVANCE IN PROFITS

The profit and loss account balance amounts to £5,298,404 5*s.* 7*d.*, representing the net profit for the year 1935, an increase of £418,455. Adding the balance brought forward of £5,614,453 16*s.* 2*d.*, we have the sum of £10,912,858 1*s.* 9*d.* with which to deal. Already your board has made appropriations for taxes and interim dividend (less tax on both classes of shares) amounting to £2,216,820 0*s.* 2*d.*, which leave a balance now available for disposal of £8,696,038 1*s.* 7*d.*

There are a few observations I would like to make before dealing with the recommendations for final appropriations. The increased profit is, of course, the result of a wholesome increase in the Company's volume of trade last year. It is true that expansion of your Company's operations was responsible for some part of the increased trade, but, in the main, the growth in sales and profits is due to, and a reflection of the astonishing recovery this Country has achieved.

An encouraging feature of the past year's trading was the steadiness of the upward trend in business all through the country. The depressed areas show a very decided improvement, and the Company's branches in such districts have produced better results than for some years. This surely is an indication of further industrial recovery and more work. It is interesting to note that the whole of the increased business done in the past year must have been on British manufactured articles inasmuch as our imports represent a lower proportion than heretofore. (Hear, hear.) British manufacturers have had an opportunity within the beneficient shelter of import tariffs to overcome the difficulties and solve the problems of economical production which naturally beset them when they first attempted to produce goods previously imported. Last year, particularly, your Company enjoyed the full benefit of the increased facilities for mass manufacture by British manufacturers, and increased sales and satisfied customers definitely grow out of this condition.

NEW BRANCHES OPENED

Forty new branches were opened during the year, making a total of 637. These new stores are mostly of a small type, located in the new housing communities, and whilst at present they do not contribute substantially to the total, it is felt that as these new residential centres grow in population, this policy will prove beneficial.

When at the first public annual general meeting of your Company your board, through me, expressed confidence in the future of the business and expressed the opinion that the well-being of your Company was linked up with the prosperity of the people as a whole, even the most optimistic amongst us could hardly have foreseen the sound, steady and continued improvement in industry which has been the history of the past four years. Your business is a sure barometer of conditions, and I do not think I could be accused of being prophetic in suggesting that, given peace among nations and peace in industry, even further improvements are in sight this year.

The organisation of the Company has again been enlarged, new officials being promoted, as always, from men who have risen from the very bottom of the business, and behind them is a reserve of keen, well-equipped young men, excellent material for the years to come.

In addition to a number of new stores, the programme for the present year includes a continuity of the established policy of maintaining the branches in the highest degree of efficiency and provides for the complete rebuilding of seven and enlargements and improvements to sixty-six of the existing stores.

May I, on behalf of the board, again express their appreciation of the excellent work and loyal support of the staff.

You will note on the report the board's recommendation of a cash bonus of one shilling, less tax, on the 15,000,000 Ordinary five shilling shares, which requires £581,250, and still leaves a substantial sum of £927,209 5*s.* 5*d.* to be added to the surplus.

The Chairman having replied to questions then moved the adoption of Report and Accounts which was carried unanimously. He then moved the resolutions that the balance of £8,696,038 1*s.* 7*d.* be appropriated as follows :—To building reserve £100,000, to Staff Benevolent Fund £20,000, final dividend of 2*s.* 6*d.* on 15,000,000 Ordinary shares absorbing £1,453,125, cash bonus of 1*s.* absorbing £581,250 leaving a balance of £6,541,663 1*s.* 7*d.* to be carried forward.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By TOREADOR

CONGRESSIONAL SPENDING MANIA—U.S. TREASURY PROBLEMS—SOUTHERN RAILWAY RATING APPEAL—HOME RAILWAY STOCKS COMPARED

SOONER or later the conscience of the great American public is going to be roused by the financial recklessness of Congress. The spending mania of the Senate and House of Representatives is no longer justified on economic or monetary grounds. When Mr. J. M. Keynes first advocated the policy of borrowing to spend in order to end the depression we and the Americans were being grievously deflated. The deflation of money incomes in America was so severe that drastic measures had to be taken by the Government for emergency relief. Roughly speaking, the spending policy of the Washington Government brought about an initial 10 per cent. increase in the American national income. No doubt the same or better results could have been achieved at much less cost to the taxpayer if the spending had been more wisely planned, but what was important in 1933 was to stop the deflation. It was stopped, and the wheels of recovery are now moving. Indeed, the recovery has already gathered such momentum that it is quite unnecessary to redouble the Government's spending forces. Nevertheless, Congress has just passed the Veterans' Bonus Bill over the President's veto. The Bill calls for the issue of $2,500 millions of "baby" bonds of $50 denomination payable on demand after June 15. This is not necessarily the end of Congressional wild finance. The Townsend movement is gathering strength and branch offices are being opened up throughout the United States. The Townsend plan is to provide everyone over 60 with a pension of $200 a month, which is estimated to cost the Treasury about $2,500 millions *per month*. I have no doubt, after seeing a film of the Townsend organisation, that this movement is being led by a group of ignorant fanatics, but skilful organisation or racketeering can apparently obtain a majority in Congress for any crazy scheme. It is small wonder that Wall Street is becoming inflation-minded.

* * *

Mr. Morgenthau described the Veterans' Bonus payment as the most difficult technical job that the Treasury had ever been forced to undertake. Nevertheless, orthodox methods of finance would, he promised, be used. The word orthodox may be a pleasantry. For the year ending June, 1937, the President estimated a deficit of $1,098 millions (receipts $5,654 millions and expenditure $6,752 millions). Receipts, however, included $547 millions from the processing taxes which are now uncollectable and about the same amount from social security and other taxes whose constitutional validity is in doubt. Further, the expenditures included no new appropriation for relief although Congress is expected to vote about $400 millions for this purpose. Indeed, the League of Municipalities is clamouring for an extra relief expenditure of $1,400 millions. Thus the prospective deficit for 1937 may be $2,500 millions before the Veterans' Bonus Bill is tackled. Whether Mr. Morgenthau regards a plan for the writing up of silver stocks or a further devaluation of the dollar as orthodox I cannot say, but something quite radical must be done if the American Government is to make ends meet. It is a little unfortunate that a further writing up of the gold stock to correspond with a 50 per cent. devaluation of the dollar would give the Treasury a paper "profit" equivalent to the cost of paying the Veterans' Bonus. Mr. Morgenthau has declared that the Treasury are not dreaming of further devaluation. Perhaps they are thinking of imposing tax upon tax until another deflation has been started.

* * *

The House of Lords in the railway rating case has brought joy to the junior stockholders of the Southern Railway, but its decision can only give an uncomfortable feeling to non-stockholders who are public-minded. I will not discuss again the intricacies of the railway rating law. Suffice it to say that the principle laid down by the Lord Chancellor allows a railway to deduct from its net receipts an arbitrary 15 per cent. on a somewhat arbitrary valuation of its rolling stock and plant. The difference is said to be the profit earned on the permanent way and this profit is the assessment for rating purposes. In the case of the Southern the new assessment is £1,077,131 instead of the £2,180,000 fixed by the Rating Authority. In the case of the London and North-Eastern and London Midland and Scottish, assuming that the same principles are applied, the assessments will probably be nil. And for the next quinquennium (1936–41), which will have regard to the receipts of the previous quinquennium, the assessments of all four railways will probably be nil. So the law may allow a railway company, although a big employer and trader in most depressed areas, to pay no rates, to contribute nothing towards the cost of poor relief and local social services: indeed, it may even allow it to hand over to its junior stockholders the amounts which it ought morally to contribute to the local authorities. It may be railway rating law, but socially it is not cricket.

* * *

The amounts paid by the railways in rates in 1934 and the estimated annual savings on the House of Lords decision, expressed in money and in dividends on marginal stocks, are shown in the following statement:

	Rates Paid, 1934.	Est. Future Annual Savings.	Equivalent Dividend on Marginal Stocks.
	£	£	
Southern ..	734,000	300,000	1.1% on Pref. Ordinary.
L. & N.E.	1,306,000	1,300,000	2½% on 1st Preference.
L.M. & S.	1,877,000	1,000,000	2½% on 2nd (1923) Preference.
G.W. ..	1,042,000	600,000	1.4% on Ordinary.
	4,959,000	3,200,000	

The market values of the marginal railway stocks have risen sharply, but is it wise for the stockholders to assume that they will obtain the full benefit of the savings in rates (estimated at over £3,200,000 a year) which should follow (arithmetically) upon the reductions in the assessments? Is it decent to assume that the railway managements will not feel morally bound to make some token payments to needy local authorities or to meet, at any rate, part of the claims for an increase in wages? The workers are still pressing for the full restoration of the 1931 wage cuts which would cost the railways £3,500,000 a year—L.M. and S. £1,360,000, L. and N.E. £1,050,000, Great Western £640,000, and Southern £450,000. In any case, the stockholders cannot obtain the full benefit of rating relief for technical rating reasons. The companies hand over only one-quarter of the sums payable under their assessments to the local authorities: the remaining three-quarters are paid to the Freight Rebates Fund which is used to reduce the freight charges on coal for export or for iron and steel works and on certain classes of agricultural produce. The Freight Rebates Fund is now bankrupt. Now the railways cannot increase their charges on coal and agricultural produce (by the required 30 per cent.) without losing some of the traffic. So the managements may decide to increase the charges only in part or gradually.

* * *

The Southern, which carries relatively little coal for export or iron and steel works, comes out best from this rating muddle. This group may pocket 100 per cent. of its rating relief. But it is not safe to assume that the other three groups will pocket more than 50 per cent. On this assumption the marginal stocks concerned would obtain half the benefits shown in the preceding paragraph. The next table sets out the prices of the marginal stocks a week ago, the present market prices and the prospective earnings yields if these estimates are realised:

	Price a Week Ago.	Present Price.	Estimated 1935 Earnings.	Potential Earnings.	Gross Yield % on Potential Earnings.
			%	%	
Southern Pfd. Ord...	86½	90	4	5	£5 11 0
L.N.E. Rly. 1st Pref.	56½	63	2½	3¾	£6 19 0
L.M.S. 4% 1923 Pref.	55½	62½	1⅝	2⅞	£4 12 0
Gt. Western Ord. ..	50	54	1	1.7	£3 2 9

This table shows up Southern preferred ordinary stock to advantage. Whether it will actually receive 5 per cent. in respect of 1935 is doubtful, but 5 per cent. seems assured for 1936. Great Western ordinary stock compares most unfavourably, but this company has steadfastly maintained its ordinary stock dividend at 3 per cent. and is not likely to reduce it in respect of 1935—its centenary year. Nevertheless no self-respecting investor can buy an equity stock yielding only 3⅛ per cent. on potential earnings even if the current dividend yield is 5½ per cent. As compared with L. & N.E. 4 per cent. first preference stock at 63 to yield 6.95 per cent. on earnings, L.M. & S. 4 per cent. (1923) preference stock at 62½ appears overvalued to yield only 4.6 per cent. on earnings. The latter, however, is a much smaller issue than the former, and a relatively slight increase in earnings would cover its full dividend of 4 per cent. Moreover, I may have slightly underestimated the L.M. & S. rating relief. The market is estimating potential earnings of 4 per cent. on the 1923 preference stock, but whether these bullish sentiments will survive the February dividend declarations seems to be doubtful.

Company Meeting

WESTMINSTER BANK LIMITED

THE HON. RUPERT E. BECKETT'S ADDRESS

The Annual Ordinary General meeting was held at the Head Office, London, on Wednesday last. The Hon. Rupert E. Beckett, Chairman, presiding, first referred to the death of His late Majesty the King and the meeting stood for a few moments in silence. The Chairman then referred to the changes on the Board of Directors during the year and went over various items in the balance sheet; continuing, he said (in part) :—

PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT

With regard to the Profit and Loss Account, the balance of profit for the year is £1,402,655, or less than the previous year's by £122,224. The dividends are maintained at the same rates as before, and the Directors have made two special distributions to mark our Centenary year; the first by way of bonus to the staff, pensioners, and widows, charged to expenses before declaration of our profit balance; the second by way of bonus of 2 per cent. to the partly-paid shareholders, which appears as a separate item in the Profit and Loss Account.

We have placed nothing to Premises Account, against £100,000 last year, but the allocation to Officers Pension Fund remains at £200,000, and the Carry-Forward is £112,000 less.

THE ECONOMIC SITUATION

In 1935, the volume of world trade was actually some 2 per cent. in advance of that of 1934, but its total value was without material change, whereas our own external trade shows an increase of 5 per cent. in value. Within national boundaries, a much more considerable improvement has come about, as is indicated by the fact that production and employment in most countries have increased more than world trade.

It is not surprising that world trade has made such slow and almost insignificant growth. Only a few relatively unimportant breaches have been made in tariff walls, and the world's currency ills, outside the sterling group, show but little alleviation. The solution of exchange difficulties eludes us still. General stabilisation remains, for the present, an ideal, whose realisation has been farther removed as a result of the involved political situation which has developed in Europe.

The existing dislocation of the world's currencies has been aggravated by the chaotic condition of the silver markets. The seriousness of the crisis from the point of view of producers and users of silver may be gauged from the fact that the price of the metal fluctuated during the past year between 36¼d. per ounce, the highest quotation since 1922, and 20⅞d. per ounce.

The difficulties of the gold bloc countries were greatly intensified during the past year, and one of them Belgium, was forced to yield to the pressure. A devaluation by 28 per cent. was effected, and, released from the shackles of an over-valued currency, Belgium has since enjoyed a substantial measure of financial stability and economic improvement. Her defection naturally focused attention upon the other members of the gold bloc and raised fresh doubts as to their ability to continue the defence of their currencies. France, almost alone among the major countries, experienced no improvement of her economic position last year, and her inability to enjoy the benefits of cheap money, has both intensified her budgetary difficulties and cramped industrial enterprise. Holland and Switzerland are similarly engaged in hard struggles to maintain their standards, and both failed to share in the general economic recovery of last year. In spite of unfavourable world conditions, there is hardly a phase of our own country's activity, susceptible of statistical measurement, in which last year's results were not more favourable than those of 1934. Unemployment is down and the total number of workers in employment regularly sets up fresh records; industrial production is at a higher level; overseas trade has shown a marked expansion, particularly in our all-important exports of manufactured articles; the volume of retail trade has increased substantially; bank clearings and the note circulation are both larger; railway traffics have yielded better results; and a constantly increasing output of electrical power has been needed.

Our immunity from the graver ills from which other countries have suffered, and are still suffering, is attributable, first and foremost, to the sound financial policy which has been steadfastly pursued. Our budget has been regularly and truly balanced, without recourse to illusory makeshifts. Money has been available to industry in plentiful amount, at extremely low rates of interest. When we cast off from our gold moorings in September, 1931, it would have needed a brave man to prophesy that we should weather four years' vicissitudes without the restoration of our anchorage, and that during those years we should make such substantial progress. Perhaps the most remarkable feature of those four years has been the stability of prices in Great Britain. Since we departed from the gold standard, wholesale prices in this country, as measured by the Board of Trade, have shown a variation of no more than 10 per cent., and since the beginning of 1934 one of only 5 per cent. In the United States, in the four-years period, wholesale prices have had a range of 29 per cent., in France one of 32 per cent., in Germany 16½ per cent., and in Italy 17½ per cent. It is hardly necessary for me to point out the inestimable benefit of price stability to our commercial and industrial interests, especially as, during the greater part of the four years, it has not been achieved at the cost of violent fluctuation of the foreign exchanges. Last year, despite several scares in connection with the various gold currencies, the movements of sterling were within relatively narrow limits. It is hardly too much to say that, if legal stabilisation is not yet feasible, we are already enjoying a measure of *de facto* stabilisation.

The principal feature in Great Britain's progress has been the greatly increased activity of the building industry, which, directly or indirectly, has imparted a stimulus to almost every trade. Its activity has increased, with scarcely a pause, since the middle of 1932, and is estimated to be twice as great to-day as it was at that time. It is probable that the activity of the building trades, so far at least as house-building is concerned, is approaching its peak, and that we shall see within a year or so a gradual slackening of pace. It is pertinent to ask whether this slackening will impair our economic recovery. Fortunately, such an outcome is unlikely, for the Government, by its encouragement of railway, road and public works schemes, has embarked upon an expansionist policy at the very time when it is calculated to produce the maximum benefit. This policy has given renewed confidence to industry, and there is every indication that expenditure upon capital equipment is likely to continue on an increasing scale. This is precisely the form of expansion most to be desired, and it is because the recovery in this country began with the industries producing capital goods, spreading later to those producing consumers' goods, that I regard it as more soundly based than the recovery movement in some other countries.

Of all our manufacturing industries, the iron and steel trades have made the most striking progress. The output of steel ingots and castings last year was the largest ever recorded and that of pig-iron the largest since 1929.

The textile trades have had varying fortunes. The cotton industry, on balance, has probably neither lost nor gained ground, an improvement in the latter part of the year compensating for an earlier retrogression. The wool trade, being less dependent on exports, has, on the whole, enjoyed a satisfactory year, whilst the rayon industry has continued its remarkable growth, last year's output exceeding all previous records.

The Chairman then surveyed, at length, the export trade. Continuing, he said: In the economic sphere, 1935 has been for this country the most encouraging year since the depression. The continuance of our recovery in the face of persistent difficulties; the relative stability of our prices and currency; the improving situation of Empire countries, with its possibility of a renewal of emigration; and the nearer approach of the time when lending abroad may be resumed—all these are factors of a heartening nature, and show that some, at least, of the obstacles impeding our progress are beginning to yield.

THE BANK'S CENTENARY

I cannot conclude without saying a few words on the Centenary of the Bank's foundation. The actual anniversary date is in August next, and by that time I hope there will have been compiled and published a history of the Bank throughout the hundred years of its existence. We have marked the occasion as one of rejoicing by making an extra distribution to shareholders and gifts to present and past members of our staff in all grades and in all departments. That is as it should be. But where I see an even more justifiable cause for rejoicing is in the fact that after the vicissitudes of a hundred years our institution occupies a position of unquestioned strength and soundness, of which we are all entitled to be proud.

The Chairman then "indulged in reminiscence," giving an account of the evolution of our banking system, from the small private banking firms, during last century, and continued: Big business required big banks, whose gathering grounds were of such extent that they would not be incommoded by large demands in one particular area, as their resources were sufficient to take any seasonal strain. So the amalgamations of the banks became an integral part of modern industrial development, and we now see the business of these islands, with its ramifications all over the world, being conducted, on its financial side, by the comparatively few banks of to-day. Amalgamations among the banks have produced a higher standard of technique than existed, or indeed was needed, at the beginning of this century, and have resulted in a degree of safety for the depositor which enables him to sleep soundly in the knowledge that the bank will be ready and able to pay him his money on demand.

Throughout this evolutionary process, British banking has ever been the handmaid of commerce, expanding its units as commercial and industrial units have expanded. Some are to be found who ascribe to the banks the powers of a dictatorship, with energies concentrated on the advancement and enrichment of the few. That is moonshine. The proprietors of the banks, the shareholders, are thousands in number. In the case of our own institution, if this Bank does well, more than 50,000 people benefit, and those in charge of its destinies have as their supreme goal the safety of the funds entrusted to them, the confidence of shareholders and depositors, and the keeping of absolute faith with all.

The report and accounts were unanimously adopted.